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issue nine july '96

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PLAY



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WIPEOUT 2

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PROJECT OVERKILL

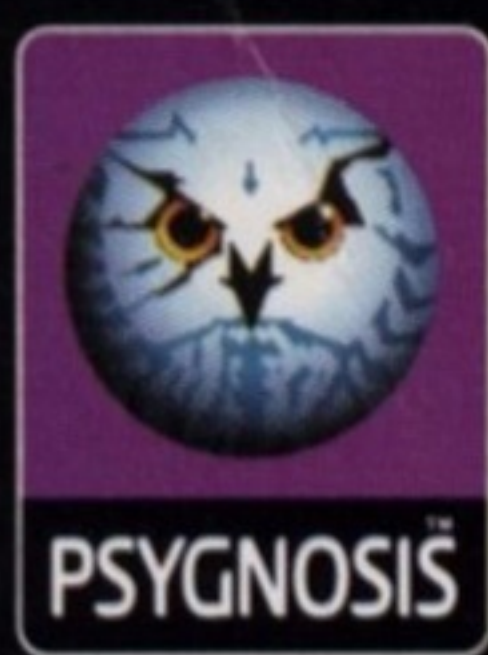
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**BEYOND
TEKKEN 2**

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4
players and
sticks the ball in
the top corner
HE CAN'T TELL YOU



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SOUL EDGE

EXCLUSIVE!

THE
BIG
GAME

22 In a worldwide scoop, PLAY brings you the first report on Namco's stunning new beat-'em-up, the awesome speed and spirit of *Soul Edge*. Boasting a true 3-D perspective, vicious weapons, all-new styles of gameplay, and some effects which left us absolutely gobsmacked! *Soul Edge* IS the future of PlayStation.



5
**WAYS TO
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THE REGULARS...

PLAYSTATION WIRED

06 How does the PlayStation shape up to the Nintendo 64? We bring you the full story from the biggest computer entertainment show in the world – E3. All the games, every bit of gossip – we've got the lot.

WALL OF GAME

49 This month, we bust open *Rise of the Robots 2* – every cheat and devious tactic is explained in full.

STATION MASTER

80 All the latest tips and cheats for the games you are playing, plus two massive guides. If you want us to tip a particular game, contact us now.

ADDIDAS POWER SOCCER 78
DESCENT GUIDE 80

SUBSCRIPTIONS

53 If you like what you see (and who can blame you?) then why not save yourself an absolute fortune on the cover price (plus the effort to go down to the shops and buy a copy) by subscribing to the Most Powerful Games Magazine on Earth.

ARENA

92 The letters section, where you get to air your views and discuss anything under the PlayStation umbrella.

PLAYBACK

94 Want to know the games that PLAY really rates? Then you'd better turn to Playback, where we've rated the ten best games in each genre. Sports, shoot-'em-ups, racing games – they're all there in this handy buyers' guide.

INTERVIEW: A BEACH BARBIE WITH JON RITMAN

96 The genius behind such Eighties hit games as *Head Over Heels*, *Batman* and *Matchday* spills his guts (not literally of course) on the beach with some grilled shrimp and kebabs sizzling on the barbie nearby. Who said interviews were stuffy and boring?

PLAY

issue nine



Best selling Unofficial PLAYSTATION Magazine!

PROJECT OVERKILL

30 Overkill it certainly is, but we're not complaining. Check out our exclusive behind-the-scenes feature on the goriest game on PSX.



WORKSTATIONS

✚ Your first look at the latest games still in development. If it's behind closed doors, we're the ones with the battering ram!

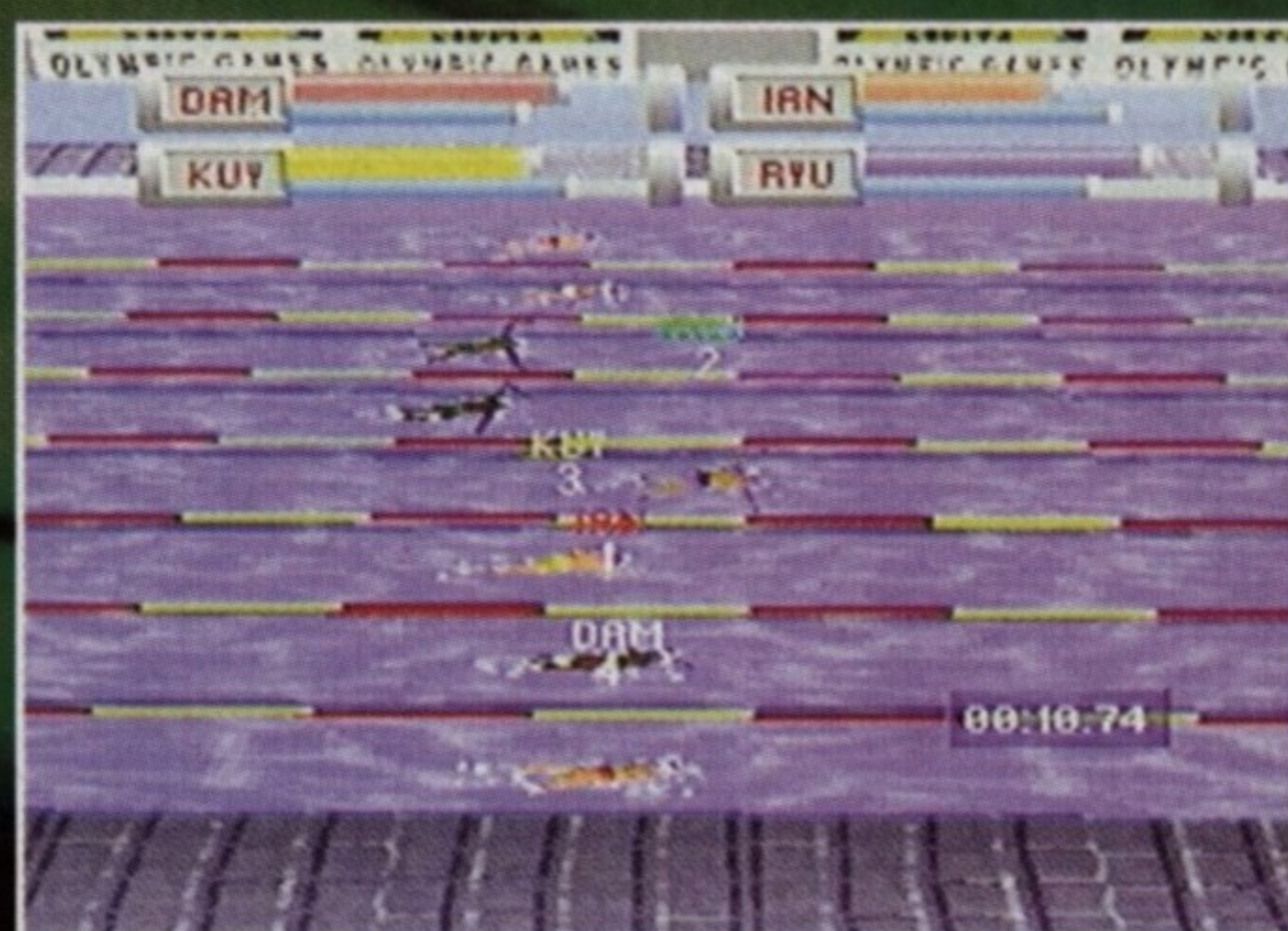
SOUL EDGE

You'll have to wait until September to play *Tekken 2* officially, but is it really worth the wait? *Soul Edge* could be even better...

PROJECT OVERKILL

Doom looks a complete wimp compared to this; a gory shoot-'em-up with no equal...

SOUL EDGE	22
PROJECT OVERKILL	30
CRASH BANDICOOT	36
FIRO & KLAWD	38



OLYMPIC GAMES VS TRACK & FIELD

44 Two titanic sports games clash skulls in our great Olympics head-to-head. Can *OG* hope to fight off the might of Konami's *Track & Field*?

WIN!

£600 of radio controlled cars with Mindscape to celebrate the impending release of *Supersonic Racers*!

WIN

A 25" TV worth £600 with Telstar Electronic Studios.



WIRED UP

✚ A short preview look at the hottest games before the full review. Space is tight, so only the most exciting prevail.

WIPEOUT 2097	84
VIRTUAL OPEN TENNIS	86
CENTRE COURT	87
DESTRUCTION DERBY 2	88
AQUANAUGHTS	89

inside play contents



CRASH BANDICOOT

36 PlayStation gets cuddly mascot scocker! *Crash* will give *Sonic* a run for his money! Read our full report.

WIPEOUT 2

84 The biggest sequel on PSX and it's right here! *Wipeout 2097* is bigger, better and faster. Awesome!



PLAY REVIEWS

✚ The very latest official and import games are reviewed here by the experts – no other magazine gives you this many reviews per issue.

OLYMPIC GAMES	42
TRACK & FIELD	45
FADE TO BLACK	54
OLYMPIC SOCCER	58
TOP GUN	60
BIG HURT BASEBALL	64
SAMPRAS EXTREME	66
VIRTUAL GOLF	68
NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '96	70
A-TRAIN (IMPORT)	72
CHEESY	74



SONY SURPRISED absolutely everyone at the E3 show in Los Angeles when they announced that the PlayStation was going down to £199. It is hard to describe the euphoria that enveloped the show as soon as the word got out. It was without a doubt the best kept secret in the entire industry.

The chances are many of you reading this have already snapped up an ultra cheap PSX and who can blame you? All I have to say is that you are very lucky because we are now entering the second phase of PlayStation gaming – a tidal wave of games so fantastic you will never look back, let alone consider buying another console.

Nintendo 64 was good, what there was of it, but you can't buy class. The games will be too expensive, there won't be enough of them and that my friends is why the PlayStation wins every time.

For the full rundown of every single game coming out this year, check out PlayStation Wired. Enjoy the mag!

Damian Butt
Editor

COMPO WINNERS!

Issue 6

Defcom 5 compo

Winner: Mr J Wood (Bracknell)
Runners up: Mark Hicks (Glos), Mick Blundell (Solihull), Mary Swann (Leeswood)

Impact Racing compo

Winner: Simon Gray (Buckingham)
Runners up: Andrew Cunningham (Doncaster), M Shelton (Huddersfield), Greig Paterson (Broxburn).

Winners for Issue 7 & 8 will be announced next issue.

PLAYSTATION wired

n e w s • s n i p p e t s • r u m o u r s • h

PLAYSTATION SUPER CONSOLES LOCK HORNS AT E3!

WALLOP! WHEN SONY sliced £100 from its RRP for the PlayStation, the heads of Nintendo visibly buckled for a split second before regaining composure. Sony was loving every minute of it.

But hang on a minute, we're talking about Nintendo; a company that has never underestimated its rivals and who has always had the last laugh. Surely they had something up their sleeve?

The E3 show in Los Angeles was important for one reason and one reason alone – it was where Sony and Nintendo would face each other in the corporate arena for the first time. A giant game of poker, if you will, where Sony was calling Nintendo's bluff.

But it's not really a fair fight is it? Despite what you might have heard the Nintendo 64 is not likely to hit these shores until early '97, maybe even March because Europe is not a

big enough market to warrant a worldwide release.

Then there's the price. PlayStation is now just £199, and N64 is still predicted to be £249. The games are more expensive too. The price of a PlayStation game is between £40-50, but due to Nintendo's costly, and in our opinion, outdated cartridge system, N64 games will retail for £60+!

And finally you've got the number of games available for each system. Nintendo only showed 12 games at E3, but by this Christmas, the PlayStation back catalogue will number 125, including games which will never see the light of day on the N64, such as *Wipeout 2*, *Resident Evil*, *F1* and *Soul Edge*. It all goes to confirm what we already know. Nintendo may have the heritage, but the PlayStation has got the muscle. Check out the evidence for yourself...



Tenka
£40-50

March '97



DD2
£40-50

Nov '96



Resident
Evil
£40-50

Out now!

NOZIN' AROUND

NOZIN' AROUND

RUMOURS WE can't substantiate, whispers of secret projects, general snooping, that's what this regular column is all about – we'll do our utmost to find out all the juicy titbits that the Sony PlayStation has to offer.

Acclaim will be releasing *Bubble Bobble* for the PlayStation this summer. Fans of the ancient puzzle/platform game will instantly rejoice, but wait – there's more. Not only is the original 100 level two player game included on the disk, but there's also the sequel, *Rainbow Islands* as well! Look for it soon, it's fan-bleedin'-tastic and no mistake.

Apparently, the word is Virgin Interactive Entertainment have signed up David Braben to work on a version of *Elite* for PlayStation. Thank God for Sony's stringent bug testing measures!

Tekken 3's development team has apparently been split over the decision whether or not to include weapons in the game in response to *Soul Edge*. One half believe the pure hand-to-hand aspect should be retained, whereas the other half want knives and guns.

Over at tadpole corner, the baby spawn are talking about nothing else but the wondrous rumour that Bullfrog is re-surrecting *Populous* for the PlayStation, to be called *Populous 3*.

The word in the cabbage patch this month is that Acclaim are looking into a conversion of the Nintendo 64 game, *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* for the PlayStation.

Software companies are currently falling over themselves to sign up the rights to *Twister*, the hit tornado movie that has taken America by storm (intentional pun inc). The film, which was produced by the same team who did *Jurassic Park*, is due in the UK later this year.

SON VS N64!



March '97
£40-50



Soul Edge Xmas
£40-50



F1 Sep '96
£40-50



Project Overkill Sep '96
£40-50



Wipeout 2 Sep '96
£40-50



Sony PlayStation – £199
launched – Sep '95
av price of games £40-50

Nintendo 64 – £249 (maybe)
Launch in UK – Early '97
Av price of games £60-70



Int Track & Field
£40-50



Dark Forces Xmas '96
£40-50

SOFT WARS



Mario 64 Early '97
£60+



Shadows of the Empire Early '97
£60+



Mario Kart R Early '97
£60+



Cruisin' USA Early '97
£60+

THOSE RELEASE DATES IN FULL

OBVIOUSLY these dates were supplied to us in good faith and are correct at time of print.

JULY

Quest for Fame (IBM)
Olympic Games (US Gold)
International Track & Field (Konami)
Fade to Black (EA)
Sampras Extreme (Codemasters)
Cheesy (Ocean)
V-Tennis (Acclaim)
Centre Court Tennis (Telstar Electronic Studios)
Space Hulk (EA)
Time Commando (EA)
Actua Golf (Gremlin)
Starfighter 3000 (Telstar Electronic Studios)
Gunship (MicroProse)

AND THE SLIPPERS...

GAME (PUBLISHER)	WAS	Now
Blam! Machinehead (Core)	June	August
Command & Conquer (VIE)	November	March '97
Tunnel B1 (Ocean)	July	August
Le Mans (EA)	September	November
NHL Powerplay Hockey '96 (VIE)	June	September
Konami Links (Konami)	June	August
Tomb Raider (Core)	June	August
Resident Evil (VIE)	July	August
Sim City 2000 (Maxis)	June	September
Myst (Psygnosis)	June	MIA/DOA

CAPCOM HITS BACK!

PREPARE TO BE HAMMERED

again because predictably, there *will* be a sequel to the longest running series since Friday the 13th – *Street Fighter Alpha 2* is on its way from Japan. Featuring all the usual Chun Li-ery, the sequel to the most playable 2-D beat-'em-up of all time features 18 characters (five new and three previous secret ones), a custom combo system to create your own multi-hit combos (13 hits are not unusual), and some brand new reactive backgrounds. Tired of *Tekken*, sick of waiting for *Soul Edge*, *SFA2* could be the answer. End of the year release.



Capcom will also soon be releasing *Marvel Super Heroes* (a beat-'em-up featuring – yes you guessed it – Marvel comic characters), and *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*, an SGI-rendered isometric adventure where the player can choose to play one of seven shape-changing characters. Could be a sleeping hit?

FROM DUSK TILL DAWN

DAWN OF DARKNESS from Ocean, is set in a true 3-D environment, taking first-person shoot-'em-ups into a new dimension. The aim of the game is to deliver the village of Nightfall from evil and it features a head-to-head option on the PlayStation which is completely addictive. More news soon.



[ABOVE] *DOD* looks remarkably like *Duke Nukem 3D* and has a very smooth engine.



[ABOVE] The level of detail far exceeds the likes of *Alien Trilogy* and *Doom* on PSX.

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ART

THIS IS TOMB RAIDER

from Core, a game we think is very promising indeed. You play a female explorer, it's in full 3-D, there are great special effects such as the multi-level catacombs to explore (some parts are underwater) and the fact that when an enemy enters the same room (a wolf for example), your guns are automatically drawn and keep the wolf in your sights. A surprise hit from Core then, look out for a Workstation in a PLAY near you...



"FAST FAST
FAST

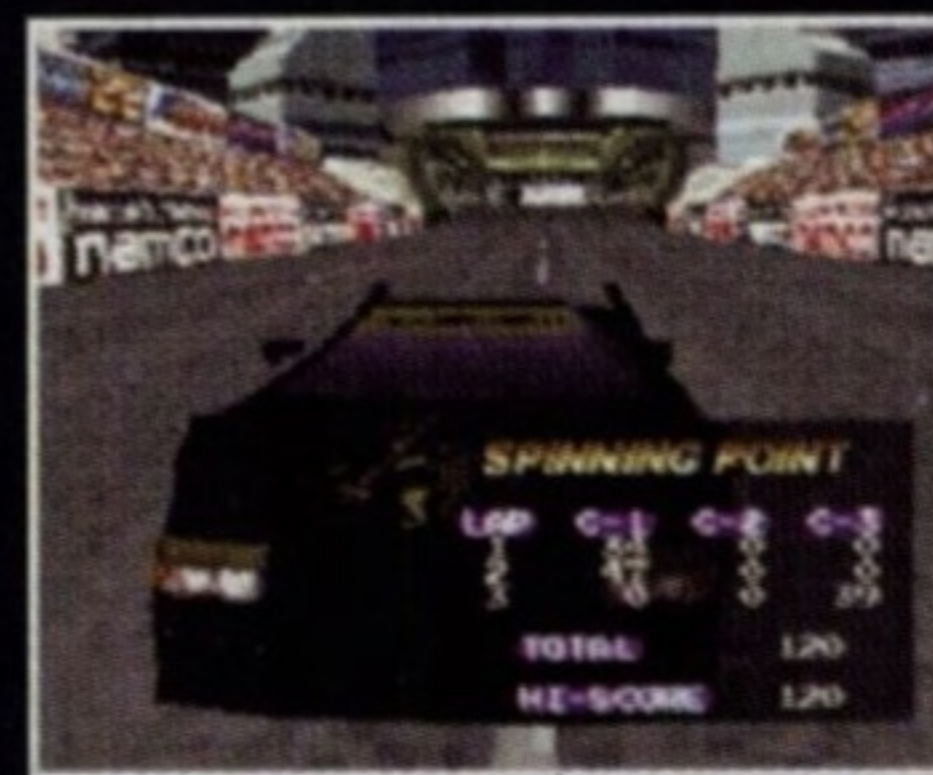
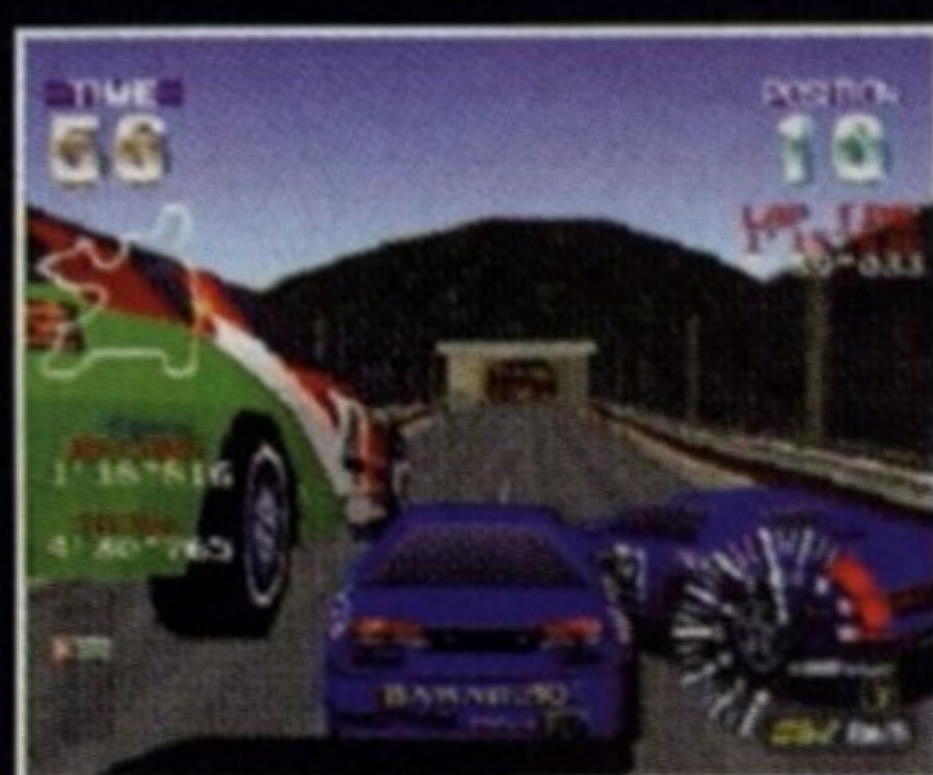
SO UP AND DOWN
IT WILL MAKE YOU
CAR SICK



BRILLIANT."

— C&VG 95%.

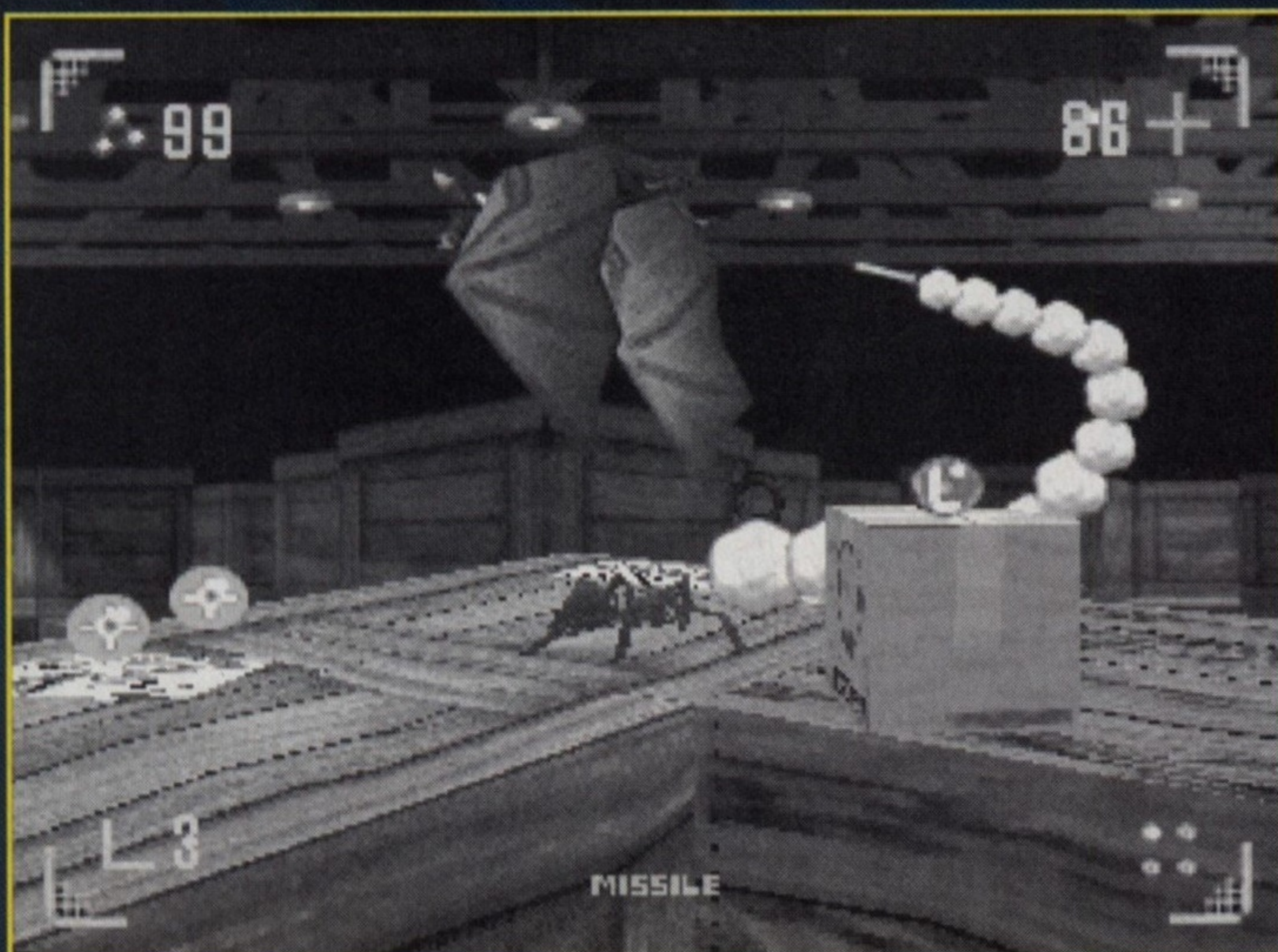
namco



SONY PRICE CUT SEGA SCARED

YOU MAY already know about Sony's dramatic PlayStation price cut, from £299 to £199, in order to see off rivals Sega Saturn and the not-yet-arrived Nintendo 64. Jim Whims, executive vice president of SCE said of the move, "If you're going to drop your price, go big or go home." Sega naturally dropped the price of a Saturn from £249 to the same, whilst stating that they were going to do so all along (apparently the bosses were up all night trying to balance the books!). Nintendo are now in a very

difficult position because they planned to come in at £249 but may now have to re-think their strategy or risk the Nintendo 64 falling at the first fence. We at PLAY applaud Sony's move, but what will it mean in the long run? Well, almost certainly it will lower the average age of a PlayStation owner, because more parents will buy them for their children, especially at Christmas, and so more games aimed at a younger audience will most certainly appear. Letters please.



[ABOVE] BMG's *Spider* was one of the most talked about games at the E3 show. Attendees raved over its smooth animation and the sense of depth in the levels. Well done BMG for snapping it up.

INCY WINCY...

THIS IS SPIDER, a brand new game from BMG that will be out for PlayStation at the end of the year. Boasting smooth 3-D graphics and a hectic soundtrack, the gameplay has you as the titular arachnid exploring tons of super-sized levels. It looks great and we'll have more news next issue. Just thought you'd want a sneak preview.



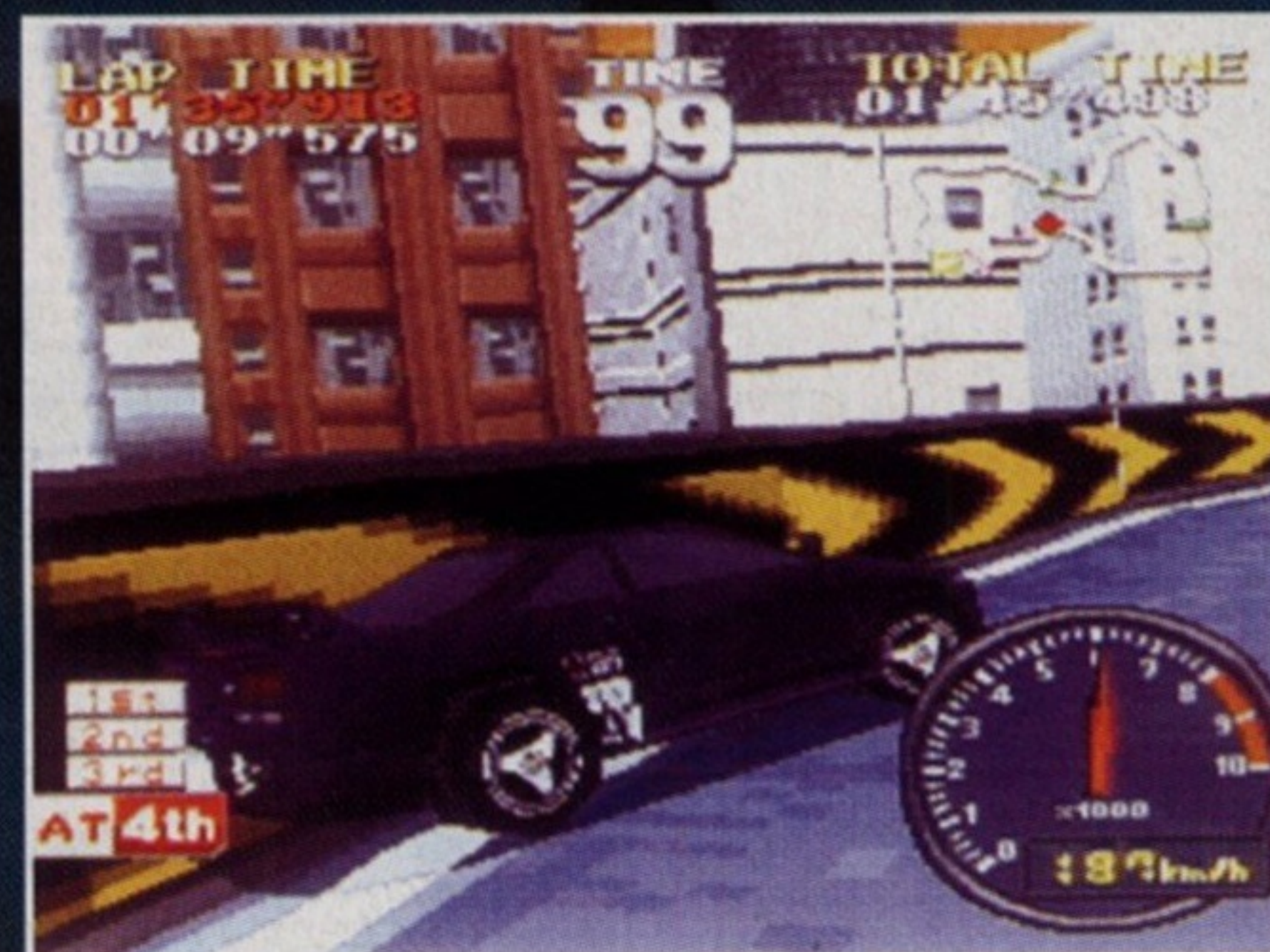
[ABOVE] And you thought spiders spent all their time trying to climb out of baths.



[ABOVE] Players face a multitude of anti-arachnid enemies, like this wasp.

TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE CONVERTED!

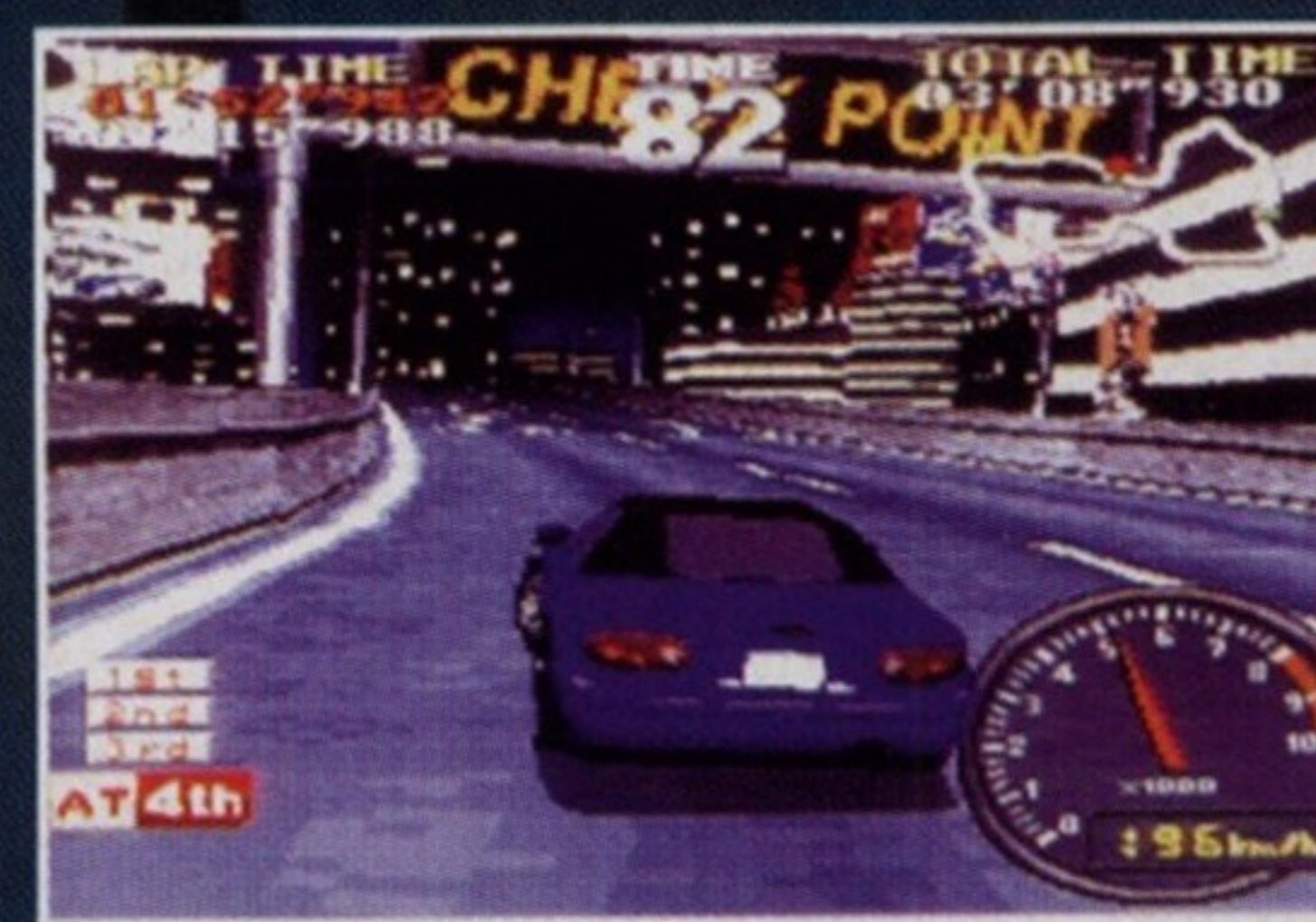
TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE is going to be massive. Why? Because it's *Ridge Racer: The Next Generation*. Based on the frantic Japanese coin-op, *Drift King*, you race one of 12 performance cars on the streets of Tokyo (they have been accurately modelled on the real things) and as well as other drivers, you have to ram off police cars and even GATSO speed cameras! Points are awarded for winning race positions and perfecting power slides (as seen in the drift mode in *Ridge Racer Revolution*) and you can spend the money on customising your car, such as boring out the engine, fitting turbo chargers and bigger intakes, and bigger exhausts – it's a poser's dream. THB is set to arrive on the PlayStation in the Summer in Japan, so expect a winter release over here. Expect a game that will blow the doors off all other racing games.



[ABOVE] Players in *Tokyo Highway Battle* get points for the perfect power slide (drift).



[ABOVE] THB features texture mapped 3-D polygon graphics. What doesn't these days?



[ABOVE] The chance to thrash loads of Jap cars around the streets of Tokyo – bliss!

PLAY+ RECOMMENDS...

RESIDENT EVIL

It doesn't get much better than this. *Resident Evil* is the perfect blend of the finest horror beans. The graphics are top notch, sound is dark and eerie, and you get to crush zombies' heads. What more could you ask for?



OLYMPIC GAMES

Olympic Games came out slightly ahead in our sports head-to-head this issue (see page 42) and even though it looks rough, the playability is bang on. Konami's *Track & Field* is the looker of the pair though.



FADE TO BLACK

Flashback never appeared on the PlayStation, but who cares when the sequel is this good? *Fade to Black* is a stunning 3-D adventure which combines quirky French puzzle-solving with shoot-'em-up action.

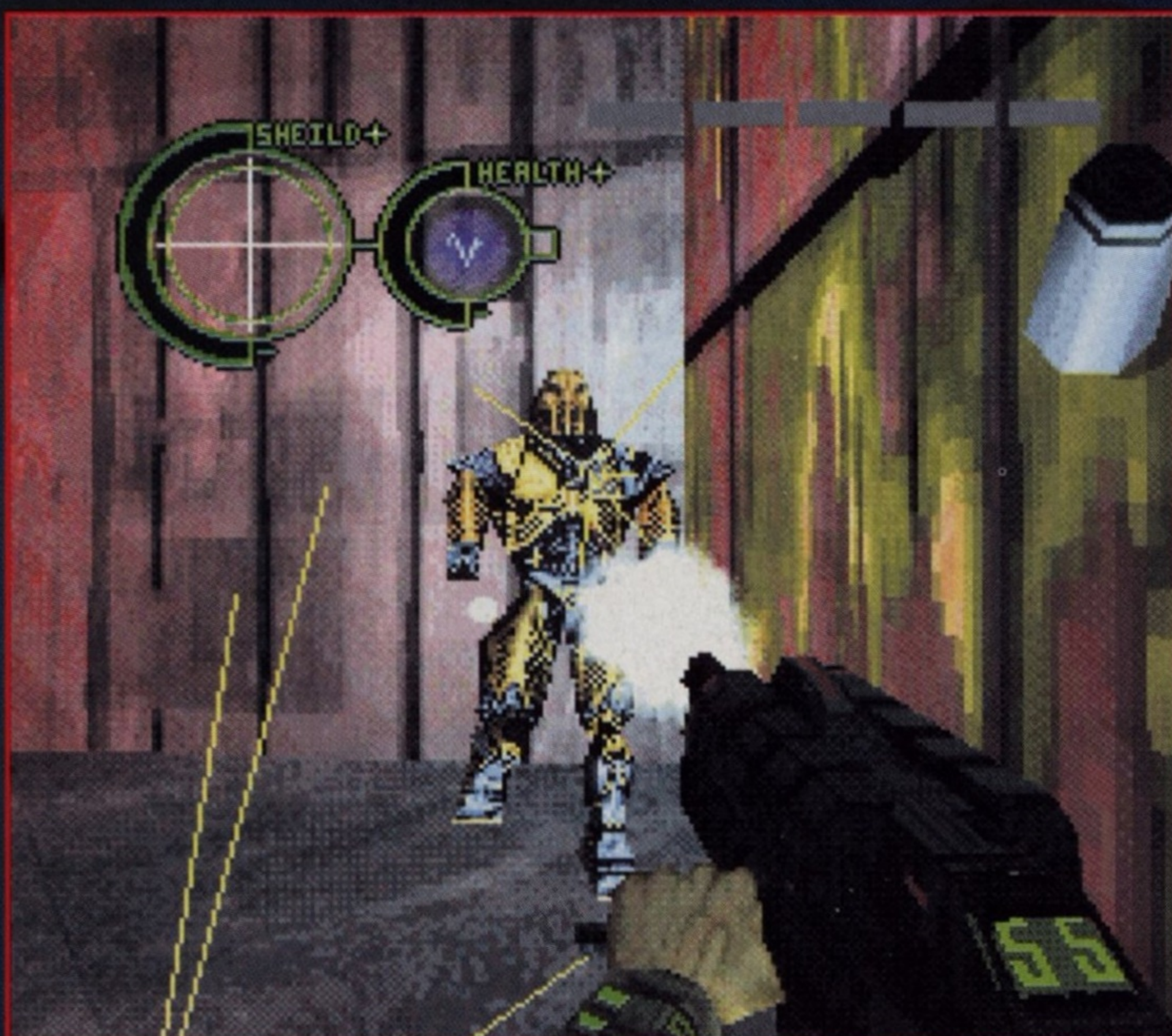


PERFECTION

PSYGNOSIS HAD by far the most astounding range of products at the E3 show. *Wipeout 2097*, the much hyped sequel was far better than expected, with sensible controls that actually respond to your pad inputs and most impressive of all, animated backgrounds, such as the terrific moment when you reach the crest of a hill and see an entire city in front of you, and then a monorail train roars past overhead. The developers have beefed up the weapons and made it easier to collect and target them, plus more emphasis has been made on the handling of the racers. High hopes for this one when it arrives in October.

Destruction Derby 2 has also been tweaked beyond belief. Improvements include wider tracks so that you can judge corners (up to five cars can drive side by side), jumps, and you can even flip other cars; resulting in damage all over instead of just the sides. More information on these two games starting on page 84. *DD2* is slated for November.

But of course the 'Daddy' is *F1*, the best simulation of motor sport we have ever seen. All the cars are identical to their real life counterparts, Murray Walker does the commentary, and the physics are spot on – buy a steering wheel in anticipation because this is a Formula One fan's nirvana. More news soon.



[ABOVE] *Tenka* is Psygnosis' attempt at a first person shoot-'em-up – and they've done a bloody good job. The graphics are about ten generations better than *Doom* and it runs at least twice as fast!



[ABOVE] *Wipeout 2* proves that developers do listen to criticism because everything we said was rubbish has been corrected.



[ABOVE] *The City of the Lost Children* is a lush graphical adventure that makes full use of the PlayStation's palette and built in hardware.

INTERNATIONAL PLAY BOYS

WHO TO CONTACT AT PLAY MAGAZINE...



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Damian is the editor and is therefore responsible for everything that goes into the mag. Send your letters/complaints to gecko@paragon.co.uk, or just mark your letters for his attention.



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Ian is the deputy editor which means he does all the work while Damian swans off to parties/launches/orgies etc. Ian is also your point of contact for competition winners and CVs (if you want to try and join the team). ianl@paragon.co.uk.



ASAM AHMAD

Games, games and more games. Asam is your man if you want to know what's coming out and when, or especially a technical query. Send your letters or e-mail him now. Or e-mail caveman@paragon.co.uk.

CONTRA RETURNS!

APART FROM the brilliant *Project Overkill* (see Workstation on page 30) and *Track & Field* (reviewed on page 45), Konami still has plenty of aces up their sleeves. *Contra* is a conversion of the ancient 2-D shoot-'em-up which was converted to the Super NES as *Super Probotector*, but now it's been given an extra dimension and plenty more weapons. The idea is to crash through level after level of enemy soldiers and cause as much damage as possible without getting cut to pieces. Graphics are impressive, and it's good to see all the old bosses making an appearance, like the giant turtle. The most intriguing aspect of *Contra* though is the fact that there is a 3-D mode, where you can play the game wearing a pair of 3-D glasses. It may sound ridiculous, but we're here to tell you it works, sort of. *Contra* will be out later in the year.



[ABOVE] *Suikoden* is an anime RPG which hopes to take the PlayStation by storm because of its long term challenge and plot. We'll see...



[ABOVE] *Road Rage* is faster than anything else on the market and we think the PSX version will be one hot cookie.



[ABOVE] *Contra* is an updated conversion of the hit game *Probotector* and now features 3-D landscapes and even bigger bosses.



[ABOVE] *Broken Helix* is a *Fade to Black*-style adventure. You are Jake Burton, explosives expert and the game is very playable indeed.



ENTERTAINMENT USA



ALL THE LATEST news from the land of lax gun laws from the pen of Cat Buchanan...

 The E3 show in Los Angeles was the biggest news from the US this month, but hopefully just about all the games on show are in the news section of this month's PLAY. I'll concentrate on some tasty little tipbits that no-one else knows about...



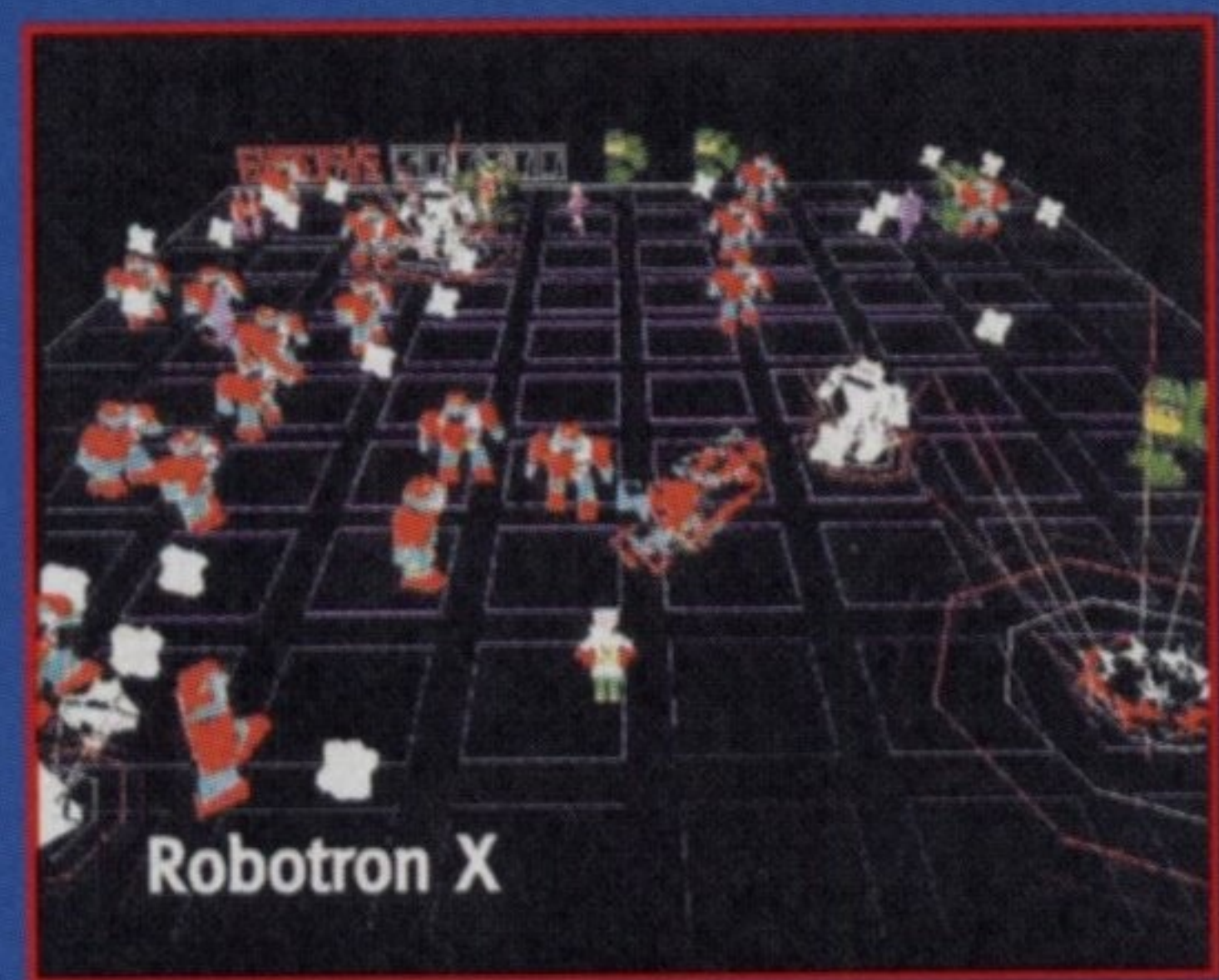
[ABOVE] Cat Buchanan - approaches the news buffet with a very large plate. And no, she's not single.

 ...Like the fact that *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* will be coming out on the PlayStation by the end of the year. Sega have made it public that *Ultimate MK* is available exclusively on Saturn, but that doesn't matter because Williams have just called it something else on the PSX. Ouch!

 You already know about Konami's *Project Overkill*, but what about their secret projects? I can reveal that not only are they producing a conversion of their hit light gun shoot-'em-up, *Lethal*

Enforcers for the PlayStation, but also a game called *Castlevania: The Bloodletting*; a brand new horror game based on their *Castlevania* series on Nintendo NES and Super NES. All I know is that you won't see it for at least eight months but it promises to be just as impressive and scary as *Resident Evil* (a sequel of which is definitely on the cards - trust me!)

 *Robotron X* is being developed at the moment and it was being prominently displayed at the show. Instead of the overhead perspective of the original coin-op, the new game has polygon characters and can be viewed from many different angles. Looks cool, but how the hell do you watch your own back when you're in a first person perspective viewpoint?



Robotron X

 And finally, make sure you keep an eye out for Onsonia's *Doom* clone, *Disruptor*, being published in the USA by Universal Interactive Studios (just like Fox). This game looks hot and features stunning graphics and the ability to use psionic attacks on your enemies. It's gonna be big! Catch ya later!



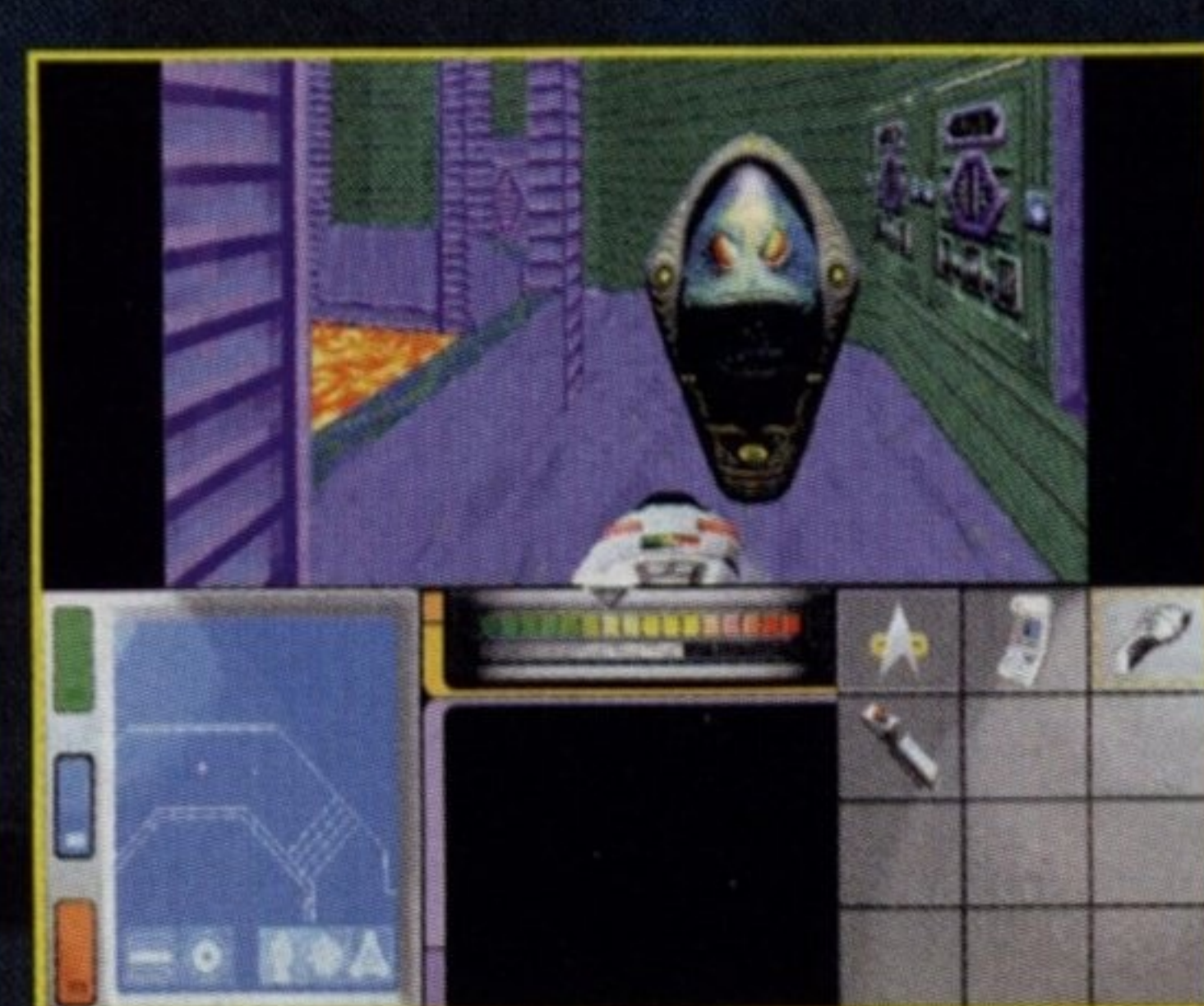
Disruptor



Contact The Video Game centre on 01202 527314 for all your importing needs.

STAR TREK BEAMS IN

TREKKERS CAN rejoice because MicroProse is releasing *Star Trek: Generations* on PlayStation this autumn. The game will be a direct conversion of the PC game, and it features a 3-D *Doom*-style exploration game, and tense space battles involving the Enterprise and various other races with dubious skin conditions. We'll have a Workstation on this game soon but the game won't be out until late '96 or even early '97.



[ABOVE] *Generations* allows you to walk around planets in real time, just like *Doom*!

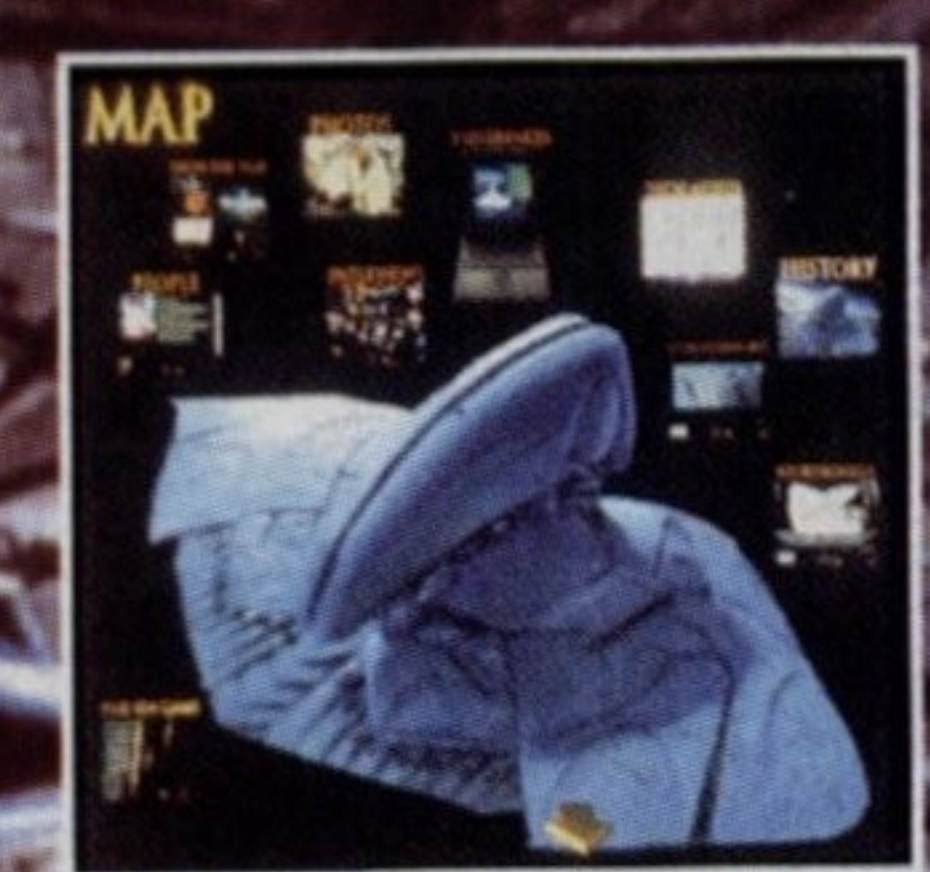
BEYOND THE BEYOND

SONY COMPUTER Entertainment is starting to ship in popular titles from Japan: the first of these will be a huge RPG strategy adventure called *Beyond The Beyond* which will be released in June. Forces of evil have risen from the very core of the Earth and a character named Finn must fight against them. He has help from a band of pirates, knights and healers who are armed with different weapons and possess special abilities. There will be a lot of emphasis on the development of the good characters, and the player must ensure that they progress well throughout the adventure. Battle scenes are shown in 3-D and the whole land to explore is shown by detailed overhead maps. Sounds good to us



[ABOVE] *Beyond The Beyond*, the PSX's first true RPG?

ID - DISAPPOINTING



INDEPENDENCE DAY, the game of the film was first revealed at E3 and turned out to be nothing more than an *Afterburner*-style flying game. Piloting one of 13 state-of-the-art jet fighters, the idea is to shoot down marauding alien craft whilst a city (a different one for each level - 16 in all) scrolls by below.

Big thrill. At the end of the game you are required to blast a huge alien mothership. Let us be the first to announce that *Independence Day* on PSX looks to be a huge disappointment, and unless some serious innovation is included, in our opinion it looks to be a bit of a turkey.

MAD AS A PITBALL!

PITBALL BY Warner Interactive International (formerly Time Warner Interactive) is a futuristic 3-D two-on-two game inspired by basketball. However unlike basketball this game is full-contact and full-action. Another multi-tap compatible game, *Pitball* will allow four players to battle it out to the death over 12 arenas and should be released in late August/September.



[ABOVE] *Pitball* is a kind of bionic basketball game. Texture mapped players anyone?

SONY SNIPPETS

TWISTED METAL 2

is the sequel to the violent racing game and will be available exclusively for the PlayStation. *Twisted Metal 2* is a no holds barred car combat game that gives the player a simple objective: blow away the competition by using any means possible. Unlike most racing games, *Twisted Metal 2* has no set tracks or routes, and your soul aim is to ram the other cars off the rendered 3-D tracks. The whole package looks like it could be a considerable improvement over the rather disappointing original. More news next issue.



[TOP] *Carnage Heart*. [ABOVE] *Twisted Metal 2* is a considerably better game.

JESUS CHRYSTLER!

HARD BOILED BY

GTE is based on the superb Frank Miller comic mini-series about a futuristic tax collector called Nixon, a sophisticated robot who is programmed to believe his is human, and naturally gets the shock of his life when he peels off his skin to find his manufacturer's name stamped all over his body. *Hard Boiled*, the game is being developed by Cryo (*MegaRace 1&2*) in France. Although Miller's work is a deep exploration of one man's betrayal and ultimate reconditioning, Cryo has translated this as a racing game to compete with the likes of *Road Rage* and *Wipeout 2097*. Hmm. Your car (an Eastwood – all future cars are named after film stars, eg Ford Stallone, Jesus Chrystler) is equipped with plenty of weapons and the gameplay is a simple, get to the checkpoint before the time runs out affair. A great inspiration, will the game live up to comic fans' high expectations? More news soon.



[ABOVE] *Hard Boiled* – based on Frank Miller's cult comic book becomes a racing game. Hmm.

JAPS EYE

ALL THE LATEST NEWS from the land of the rising sun brought to you by Konishki San...

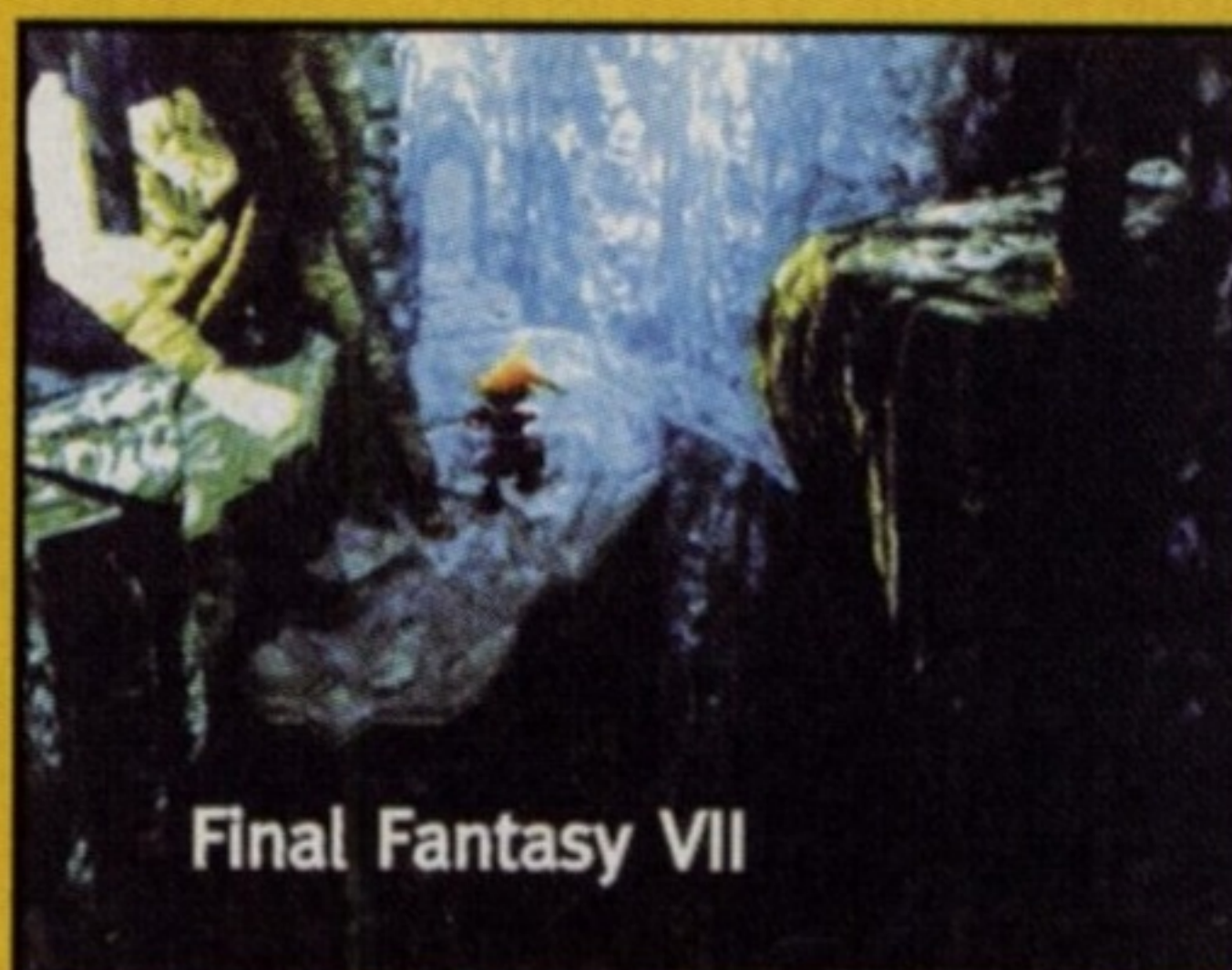
★ *Street Fighter Zero 2* will be released in Japan in August – a full four months before anyone predicted the sequel would actually appear. The reason for this rushed release is not clear, although some feel that with *Soul Edge* due nearer the end of the year, and *Tekken 2* still number one in the charts in Japan, perhaps the time of the 2-D beat-'em-up is nigh. The new game features 15 characters, most important of all is Akuma, the secret character from the arcade machine who appears to fight Ryu if you win every single bout without losing. But will this feature alone mean people will buy it over the new age of 3-D beat-em-ups? I fear not.

★ RPGs are staging a major comeback after prolonged absence on consoles. There was a time when the only games you could get on the Sega Mega Drive were crappy platform games, and even the brand new PlayStation has been rather bogged down with beat-'em-ups and racing games. Well the Japanese developers have had enough, and have set about creating a new wave of thought-provoking immersive adventure games. *King's Field* did pretty badly in PLAY so I understand, but over here the series is going down a storm. *King's Field III* has just been released to rave reviews and it looks to be the best of the triumvirate. *Wizardry VII*, *Final Fantasy VII*, *Arc the Lad II* and *Wild Arms* (mentioned last issue) have also all been heavily promoted in an effort to get Japanese gamesplayers using their brain cells and imaginations as much as their trigger fingers.

★ *Toshiden's* feisty bint, Ellis has proved so popular in Japan that she is to star in her own beat-'em-up. The game will feature a more exaggerated rendition of Ellis, plus at least four other babes who will all kick the crap out of each other to a rock music soundtrack.

★ The Japanese have long been revered for their incredible ability to make monster movies which, although look utterly fake and rubbish, are in fact compulsive viewing. Well now there's to be a monster beat-'em-up for the PlayStation called *Godzilla 2000*. You choose from eight different monsters and then battle it out in cities and other levels where there are bits of landscape you can rip up and use against your opponent. It looks utterly mad, you can be Godzilla himself, or a giant lizard or turtle, and it will coming to an importer near you in about six months.

Contact The Video Game centre (01202 527314) for all your importing needs.



Final Fantasy VII



VIRGIN BEGIN PSX PUSH

ALTHOUGH VIRGIN'S STAND at E3 was mainly to showcase PC CD-ROM product, the more persistent of us managed to get the full story on their imminent PlayStation launches.

Lands of Lore: Guardians of Destiny, the sequel to *Lands of Lore* is a real time adventure/RPG that spools each new view of the world straight from the CD depending on where you click on the screen, very much like *7th Guest*. Fans of the original are currently hopping up and down over the impending PC launch, and hopes are high for an improved version for us PSX owners.

Heart of Darkness is of course the vastly late graphical adventure developed by Amazing Studios (great T-shirts, no games yet), featuring you as a school kid sucked into a dark dimension, and some stunning animation and rendering. Expect to see it early next year.

Also from VIE is *11th Hour*, the sequel to the graphical tour de force that was *7th Guest*, and this game is obviously not being developed on PlayStation by its creators, Trilobyte, because when we asked them, they didn't have any PSX plans.

Grid Runner is a Nineties update of the classic coin-op, now set in full 3-D and featuring a two player split screen mode. Yowzer, collecting flags has never been such fun! Whereas *Spot Goes to Hollywood* is an isometric platform game featuring the red spot from the 7-Up can (what will they think of next?) and looks smart. And there's also *Golden Nugget*, a casino simulator which not only allows you to play all your favourite games, but there's also a tutorial by Sixties *Batman* actor, Adam West. Novelty island or what?

Black Dawn is a helicopter shoot-'em-up coming in the autumn and the game includes 28 missions and a two player co-operative mode. Developed by the same team who produced *Agile Warrior*, *Black Dawn* is a hostage rescue game that gives you three views of the action: cockpit, chase and full screen. Looks good and will be with us in the autumn.

Nanotek Warriors is a sci-fi shoot-'em-up set in a world full of robot servants who have gone mad. You are the commander of a NanoTek ship and like all good mindless blasting games, anything goes as long as you kill the big boss at the end. It really is *that* simple.

And finally, VIE has at last acknowledged that the epic PC CD-ROM war game, *Command & Conquer* will be released on PlayStation in early '97 and we can't stress enough that it is quite simply mind-blowing stuff.



[ABOVE] *Grid Runner* is a 48-level flag-collecting game with a split screen mode.



[ABOVE] *Heart of Darkness* is the game that time forgot. We haven't though.



[ABOVE] *Nanotek Warriors* looks to be a mad shoot-'em-up in a war against the robots.



[ABOVE] *Spot Goes to Hollywood* - an isometric platform game featuring a walking red dot.



[ABOVE] *Black Dawn* is a frenetic helicopter shoot-'em-up cum hostage rescue game set over 28 missions, some in New York.



[ABOVE] A perfect example of the attention to detail in *Black Dawn*. The Ranger on the right is texture mapped as it explodes.

SCOOBY DOO, WHERE ARE YOU?

SHAGGY, THE AMUSINGLY

named character from the cartoon, *Scooby Doo*, is set to join the rest of the Hanna-Barbera characters for *Zoiks!*, a cartoon RPG for PlayStation late this year. Developed by Tribe, *Zoiks!* features the likes of Fred Flintstone, Penelope Pitstop, Snagglepuss and Huckleberry Hound, as well as Scooby Doo in a quest to recover all the sounds from their respective cartoons which have been stolen by Dick Dastardly (who else?). The game will certainly appeal to younger players, but the zany nature



[ABOVE] "And I'd have gotten away with it if it wasn't for you meddling kids..."

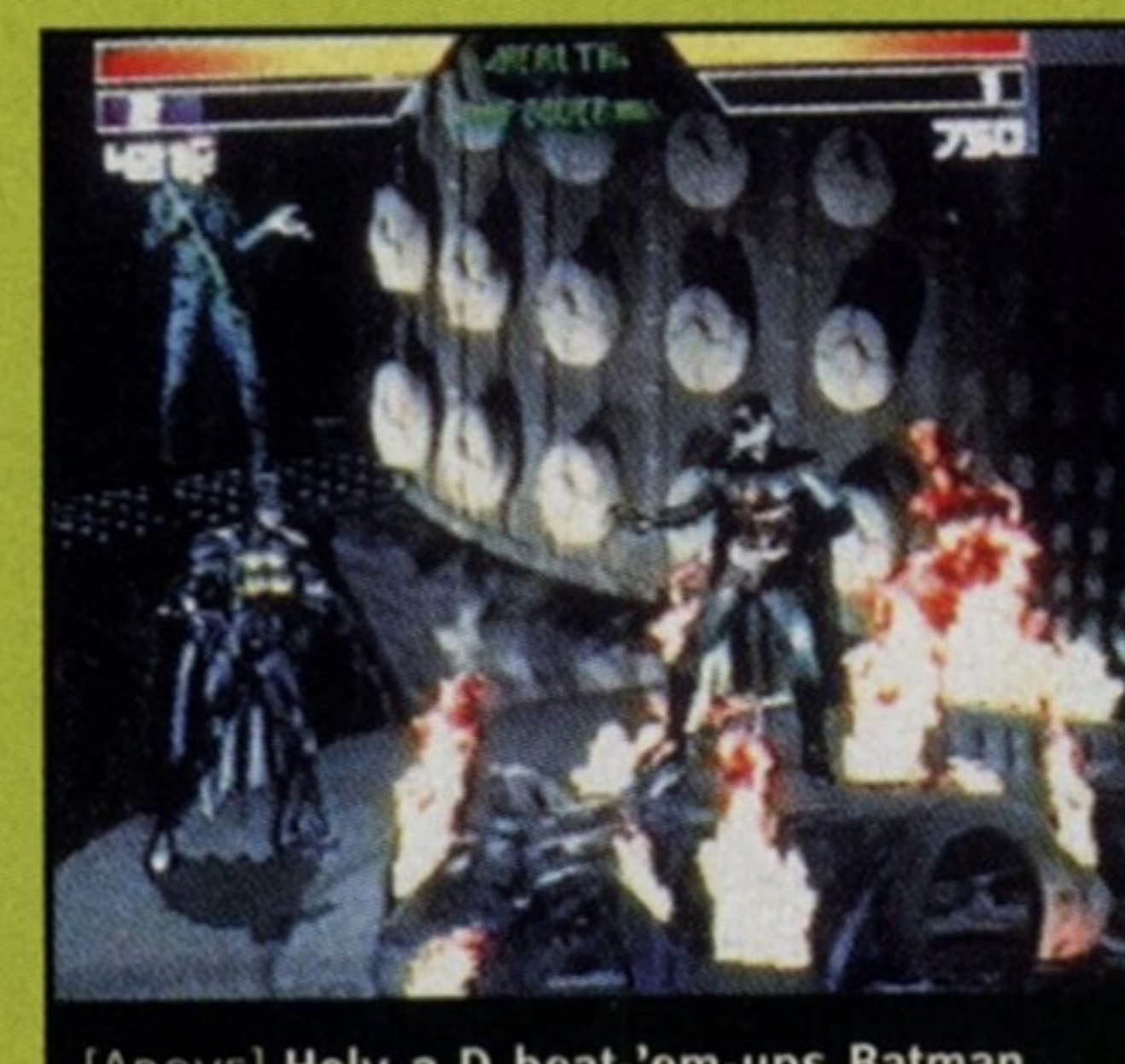
of the characters should mean adults will get a kick out of it too. Released for Xmas.

DINNER, DINNER...

BATMAN HAS

long been a favourite subject for video games and his latest digital adventure is in Acclaim's *Batman Forever: The Arcade Game*, based on the coin-op of the same name. Basically you play the Caped Crusader (or the Dark Knight, depending on how old you are) in a standard side scrolling beat-'em-up. Suffice to say the graphics are eyeball-stingingly good, but it doesn't exactly reek of ingenuity, does it? *Batman Forever* will be Ker-splat, ker-pow and ker-runching its way to the

PlayStation later this year. Acclaim and its developers are also currently working on *Space Jam* (a cartoon basketball game featuring Michael Jordan), *WWF In Your House*, *Dragonheart*, *X-Men: Children of the Atom* and finally *The Crow: City of Angels* (based on yep, Brandon Lee's final movie).



[ABOVE] Holy 2-D beat-'em-ups Batman, we're being licensed again!



[ABOVE & BELOW] *Soviet Strike* successfully brings the series from 16 to 32-bit.

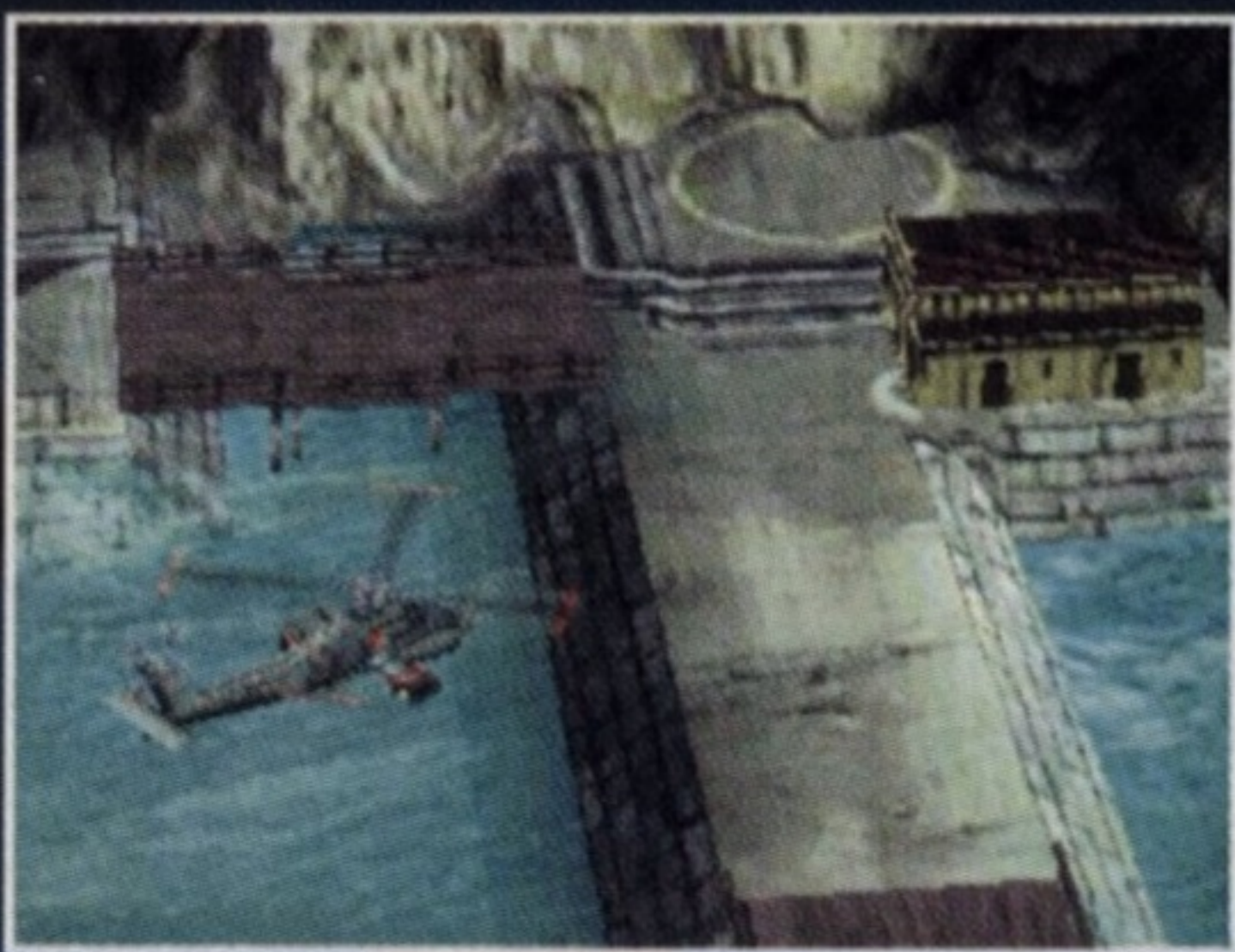


[ABOVE & BELOW] The objectives are still the same: shoot everything, rescue a few people.

STRIKE ONE TO EA!

SOVIET STRIKE was by far the most vibrant PlayStation game on the Electronic Arts stand at E3. The game is loosely based on the *Strike* series, which originally came out on Sega Mega Drive and included *Desert*, *Jungle* and *Urban Strike* – all highly playable and innovative. *Soviet Strike* is a far superior sequel and it features gorgeous detailed graphics, neat

touches like if you blow up a bridge, only amphibious craft can pass, and big meaty explosions. You control an advanced helicopter with three types of missiles, and the missions vary, from utter destruction to rescuing hostages. *Soviet Strike* doesn't look much now, but trust us, it will be one of the biggest games this year. We'll have a Workstation soon.



[ABOVE] *Andretti Racing* features both indycar and NASCAR races and it looks top!



[ABOVE] *Crusader* from EA is *Project Overkill*'s closest rival, but has far more strategy.



CHARTS

In association with

ChartTrack

Pos	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	PLAY SCORE
1.	ADDIDAS POWER SOCCER	PSYGNOSIS (FR)	PSYGNOSIS	95%
2.	RIDGE RACER REV	NAMCO	SONY	90%
3.	STREET FIGHTER ALPHA	CAPCOM	VIE	93%
4.	ALIEN TRILOGY	PROBE	ACCLAIM	91%
5.	FIFA SOCCER '96	EA	EA	78%
6.	ACTUA SOCCER	GREMLIN	GREMLIN	94%
7.	NEED FOR SPEED	EA CANADA	EA	94%
8.	PGA TOUR GOLF '96	EA	EA	86%
9.	WIPEOUT	PSYGNOSIS	PSYGNOSIS	94%
10.	TOTAL NBA '96	SONY	SONY	94%

THEY'RE COMIN' OUTTA THE WALLS!

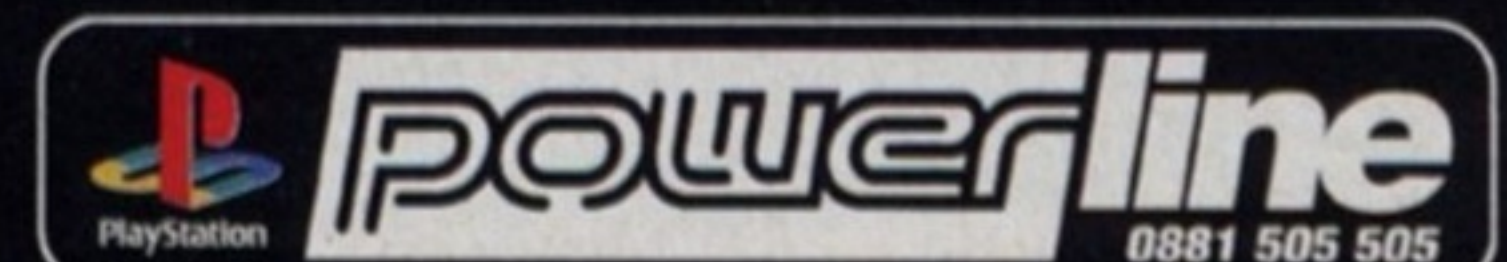
ONE UGLY motherf*****! Yep, one of the great film quotes of our time from the movie *Predator*, and now they're making a game of it, almost. *Aliens Vs Predator* is more a licence of the Dark Horse comic series, and the game is a first person perspective shoot-'em-up, very much like *Alien Trilogy*, with the player able to assume the guise of either an alien warrior, predator or colonial marine. Suffice to say if the game includes a multi-player mode the possibilities are endless; with gangs of aliens or predators ganging up on the lonely marines. Winter release folks.



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THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU CAN IMPROVE YOUR PLAYSTATION GAMING EXPERIENCE, NOT LEAST BY IMMERSING YOURSELF IN A UTOPIA OF STREAMING COLOURS AND ENVELOPING SURROUND SOUND. ASAM AHMAD TAKES A TRIP DOWN THE HIGH-STREET TO GET THE ULTIMATE KIT FOR THE ULTIMATE PLAYSTATION SET-UP. HERE'S HANDY ADVICE ON HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PSX.

THE ULTIMATE PLAYSTATION PARADISE

At this moment

in time, the demographics of a typical PlayStation owner indicate a young professional perhaps also owning a satellite viewer, with a large screen TV and a decent bass-throbbing hi-fi. Indeed, the way the PlayStation has been designed and the power that the machine offers, lends itself perfectly to this kind of set-up. An unnecessary aspiration? Let me enthuse you...

Just imagine *Ridge Racer Revolution*, or *The Need for Speed*, where you're streaming through blistering polygon graphics on a huge 34" television, with audio piped around you by means of a Dolby Pro-Logic five-speaker surround sound system rated

at an ear blasting 400 watts! Or perhaps challenging an opponent to the clinically precise *Tekken 2*, with the deep bassy sound of moans, shrieks and cries, physically shaking your body in response to a battering. One time you'll certainly start to block! Starting to get the picture?

The PlayStation is blessed. A console capable of wondrous things, games publishers are still only toying with ideas and just starting to exploit the real power it can deliver. With screen resolutions increasing, and more use being made out of the digital sound capabilities, making the most out of your machine is definitely the order of the day.

It's too easy to think that just because you've got a PlayStation, that's all you need. You'd be wrong. Playing it upon a small portable is fine, but you wouldn't be maximising the PlayStation experience. In the rest of this article, PLAY will be giving you handy advice as to setting up your PlayStation to its best possible configuration – the ultimate console!

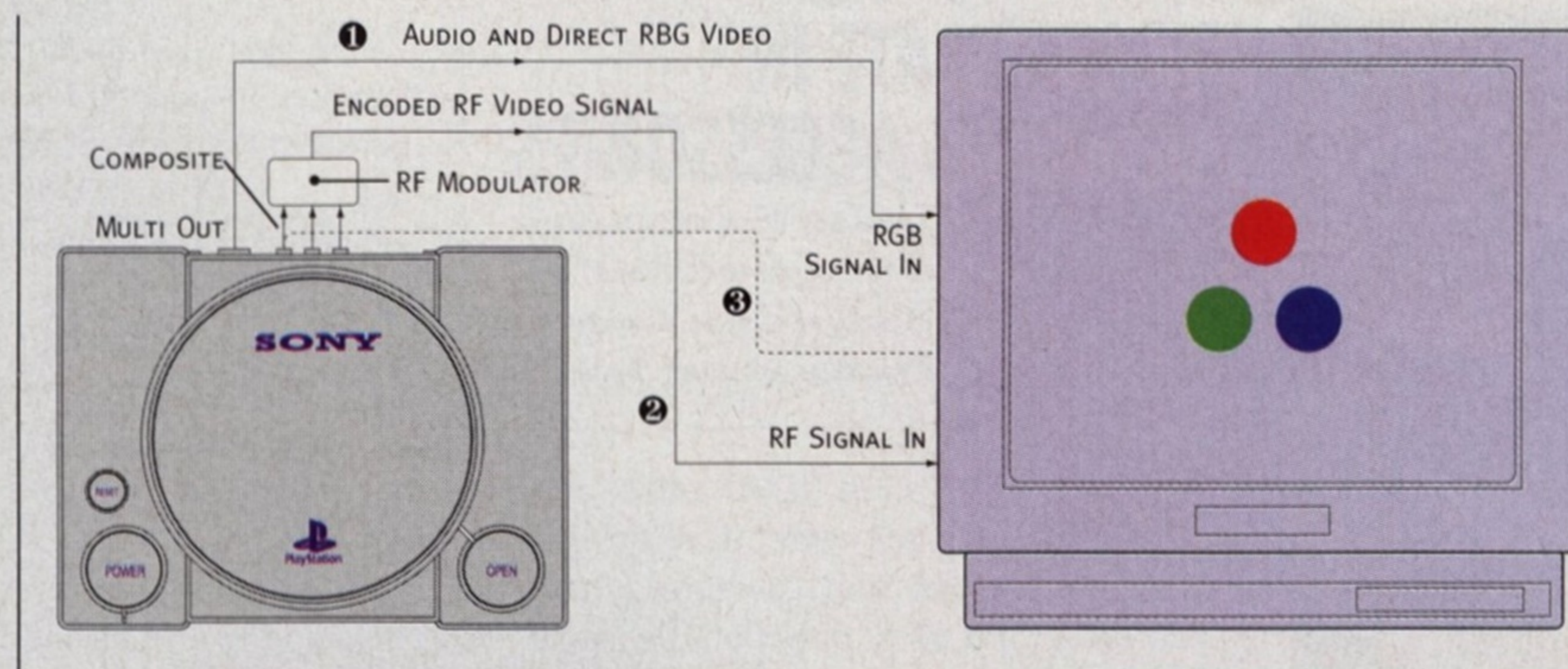
VISUAL DELIGHTS

Perhaps the most crucial part of the ultimate PlayStation set-up is the television. The set featured in this piece is a rather impressive 34" Mitsubishi multi-standard affair that can



cope with NTSC or PAL signals no problem. Not that this compatibility matters. Why? This set-up uses a PlayStation A/V SCART cable. Why? The advantages are multi-fold... I'll explain.

The PlayStation comes with a standard modulator that converts a PAL composite signal into an RF signal, just like the one from a video recorder. Apart from Sony's RF modulator being awkward in that it blocks off the left and right audio ports, by the nature of the device, the raw PlayStation video signal goes through at least THREE transformations before you see it. That's three times the signal gets processed, and each time you lose quality. Even if you are lucky enough to have a television with a composite video input and bypass the modulator, like many Sony or Philips TVs, the video signal still goes through TWO transformations before you see the picture on the screen. So



THERE ARE THREE WAYS TO CONNECT A PLAYSTATION TO A TELEVISION. THE STANDARD SET-UP (ROUTE 2) INVOLVES USING AN RF MODULATOR AS SUPPLIED WITH THE PLAYSTATION TO CONVERT THE PAL COMPOSITE VIDEO OUTPUT INTO AN RF VIDEO SIGNAL THAT ALL TELEVISIONS CAN COPE WITH. A SLIGHTLY BETTER VARIANT OF THIS IS USING THE COMPOSITE SIGNAL DIRECT TO YOUR TELEVISION IF IT CAN HANDLE IT, BYPASSING THE MODULATOR (3). THE BEST ROUTE BY FAR IS VIA THE RGB SCART CABLE THAT CONNECTS FROM THE A/V MULTI OUTPUT (ROUTE 1). A SIMILAR ALTERNATIVE TO THIS IS THE S-VIDEO SOCKET, BUT GENERALLY ONLY HIGH-END TELEVISIONS CAN TAKE AN S-VIDEO SIGNAL DIRECT.

THE ULTIMATE SET-UP?

THE SET-UP ILLUSTRATED IN THIS FEATURE, COMPRISING OF THE PLAYSTATION, A 34" MITSUBISHI MULTI-STANDARD TELEVISION, A PIONEER AUDIO/VIDEO DOLBY PRO-LOGIC AMPLIFIER, TECHNICS HORN SPEAKERS, A PIONEER MULTI-STANDARD LASERDISC PLAYER, A PANASONIC MULTI-STANDARD VIDEO PLAYER AND SATELLITE SYSTEM WOULD COST IN EXCESS OF £5000! HMMMM, A BIT OUT OF THE PRICE BRACKET OF MOST ASPIRING TECHNOPHILES. OR MAYBE NOT. HOWEVER THERE ARE A FEW OPTIONS FOR THOSE ON A BUDGET. COURTESY OF SONY, WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING PRODUCTS TO COMPLEMENT YOUR PLAYSTATION TO ENHANCE YOUR SET-UP NO-END.

[TELEVISIONS]

ALL THESE TELEVISIONS HAVE SCART SOCKETS, AND ARE NTSC COMPATIBLE, SHOULD YOU NEED IT...

- ▶ SONY KVX-2182(S) **£499.99**
- 21" HiBLACK TRINITRON NICAM STEREO WITH FASTEXT
- ▶ SONY KV-25F1(S) **£599.99**
- 25" SUPERTRINITRON NICAM STEREO, FASTEXT (SEE PAGE 28 TO WIN ONE!)
- ▶ SONY KV-29F2(S) **£949.99**
- 29" SUPERTRINITRON NICAM, DOLBY PRO-LOGIC, FASTEXT
- ▶ SONY 28WS3(S) **£1,999.99**
- 28" WIDESCREEN SUPERTRITITRON, NICAM, DOLBY PRO-LOGIC, FASTEXT
- ▶ SONY 32WS3(S) **£2,799.99**
- 28" WIDESCREEN SUPERTRITITRON, NICAM, DOLBY PRO-LOGIC, FASTEXT

[AUDIO/AMPLIFIERS]

THIS SELECTION OF AMPLIFIERS AND SPEAKERS SHOULD TANTILISE YOUR EAR DRUMS NO END...

- ▶ SDP-300 **£229.99**
- DOLBY PRO-LOGIC STAND-ALONE AMPLIFIER WITH DIGITAL DELAY
- ▶ DPL-VE100 **£379.99**
- DOLBY PRO-LOGIC KIT WITH ABOVE AMP AND FIVE SPEAKERS PLUS SUBWOOFER
- ▶ STR-D665 **£329.99**
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- ▶ SAV-A15 **£399.99**
- FULL PRO-LOGIC SPEAKER KIT WITH INTEGRATED AMP TO 100 WATTS WITH REMOTE
- ▶ SAV-A55 **£799.99**
- FULL PRO-LOGIC SPEAKER KIT WITH 170 WATT AMP AND INFRA-RED WIRELESS SPEAKERS

what's the best solution? In a word, SCART.

On the back of the PlayStation, apart from the standard connectors, there is a special A/V Multi out port. This output caters for both audio and video. The audio output is the same as using the two left and right phono connectors, so no surprise here. The video output is a different kettle of fish. On a PlayStation, all colour calculations are carried out internally by varying levels of red, green and blue components, after all, these are the three primary colours of light. Funnily enough, on a TV, all colour is reproduced by mixing red, green, and blue. By using an RGB SCART cable from the A/V Multi Out socket, in effect you are allowing the PlayStation to DIRECTLY CONTROL the colour guns in your television. What does that mean? Lot's of happy material...

Controlling the TV's colour directly means that firstly, you get the exact colour the PlayStation outputs onto your TV. Secondly, because the signal isn't getting processed into a composite signal by the PlayStation and consequently split again by the TV, you don't get colour interference nor do you get a degradation of quality inherent in the processing. Thirdly, as you're bypassing all video encoding, you are actually seeing an RGB signal, not PAL and not NTSC. Is that a gong I hear? Gadzooks! Not PAL nor NTSC?!? Now what this means is that if you have an import game, because you couldn't wait for an official PAL version to come out, you could play it on your PlayStation (with a little bit of trickery, of course), and view it in colour. This is because you are bypassing the PAL video circuitry which can't handle NTSC colour properly. AND because you are controlling the colour guns in your TV, even 60Hz signals work flawlessly, and in FULL SCREEN!

As you can see, if you are just using the output from the RF modulator, or even through the composite output, you are not getting the best out of your PlayStation.



[ABOVE] The Sony KV-25F1. Win one with Telstar on page 28!

[BELOW] DPL-VE100 Pro-Logic system — a nice bit of kit.





THE ULTIMATE IN LOUNGING ACCESSORIES

THIS HANDY SLEEPING CAT IS THE ULTIMATE ACCESSORY FOR ANYONE WHO LOSES THEIR REMOTE-CONTROLS. PERCHED CUNNINGLY ON THE SOFA ARM, HE'LL MAKE SURE YOUR REMOTES ARE AT THE READY AT ALL TIMES. MAGIC!



Get an RGB SCART cable, and you won't regret it. At around £30 for an official Sony cable, or around £20 for a third party one, both available from specialist stores such as GAME or Electronics Boutique, or bigger stores such as HMV. The SCART cable is inexpensive, and invaluable.

SOUND SENSE

Perhaps the most under-utilised feature of the PlayStation is its sound capability. When our little grey baby can stream audio from a CD and generate its own effects at an equally high quality, it stands to reason that like a normal CD player, in order to make the best of the sound, it should be pumped through a decent amplifier and hi-fi system. Obviously, the best set-up would have a full Dolby Surround Pro-Logic 5-speaker system for a truly immersive sonical



[ABOVE] Dolby Pro-Logic systems can improve your PlayStation sound no end.

experience, but an arrangement like them one featured here would cost over £2,000 with £1,600 of that on the speakers alone!

If at present you are listening to your PlayStation through your television, there are many ways to improve the quality of your sound. The first, most obvious, method is to simply connect your PlayStation to a hi-fi via the left and right phono audio connectors outputs on the back of your console to 'AUX IN' or 'LINE IN' phonos on your hi-fi. Bear in mind that you can't do this if you are using the RF Modulator to display your picture on your TV, as it obstructs access to these connectors. All you need to get connected is a stereo audio cable with 'male phono' connectors on both ends, which can be purchased from any good electrical store such as Tandy or Dixons. A point to note is that you must NOT connect the cables to the 'PHONO' or 'TURNTABLE' connectors on the hi-fi, as they are designed ONLY for record players. If you try it, you'll probably blow your amplifier – you have been warned! The transformation in sound from a television to a hi-fi is incredible, and once you try it, you'll wonder why you didn't bother before.

THERE ARE TWO MAIN WAYS TO CONNECT YOUR PLAYSTATION TO A HI-FI. METHOD (A) IS BY FAR THE EASIEST AND USES AN RGB SCART CABLE TAKING VIDEO AND AUDIO FROM THE PLAYSTATION TO THE TELEVISION. IF YOU HAVE A STEREO TELEVISION, IT SHOULD ALLOW THE DOLBY ENCODED PLAYSTATION STEREO SIGNAL TO 'PASS-THROUGH' TO ITS OWN AUDIO OUTPUT WHICH YOU CAN CONNECT TO ANY HI-FI, PREFERABLY WITH DOLBY PRO-LOGIC.

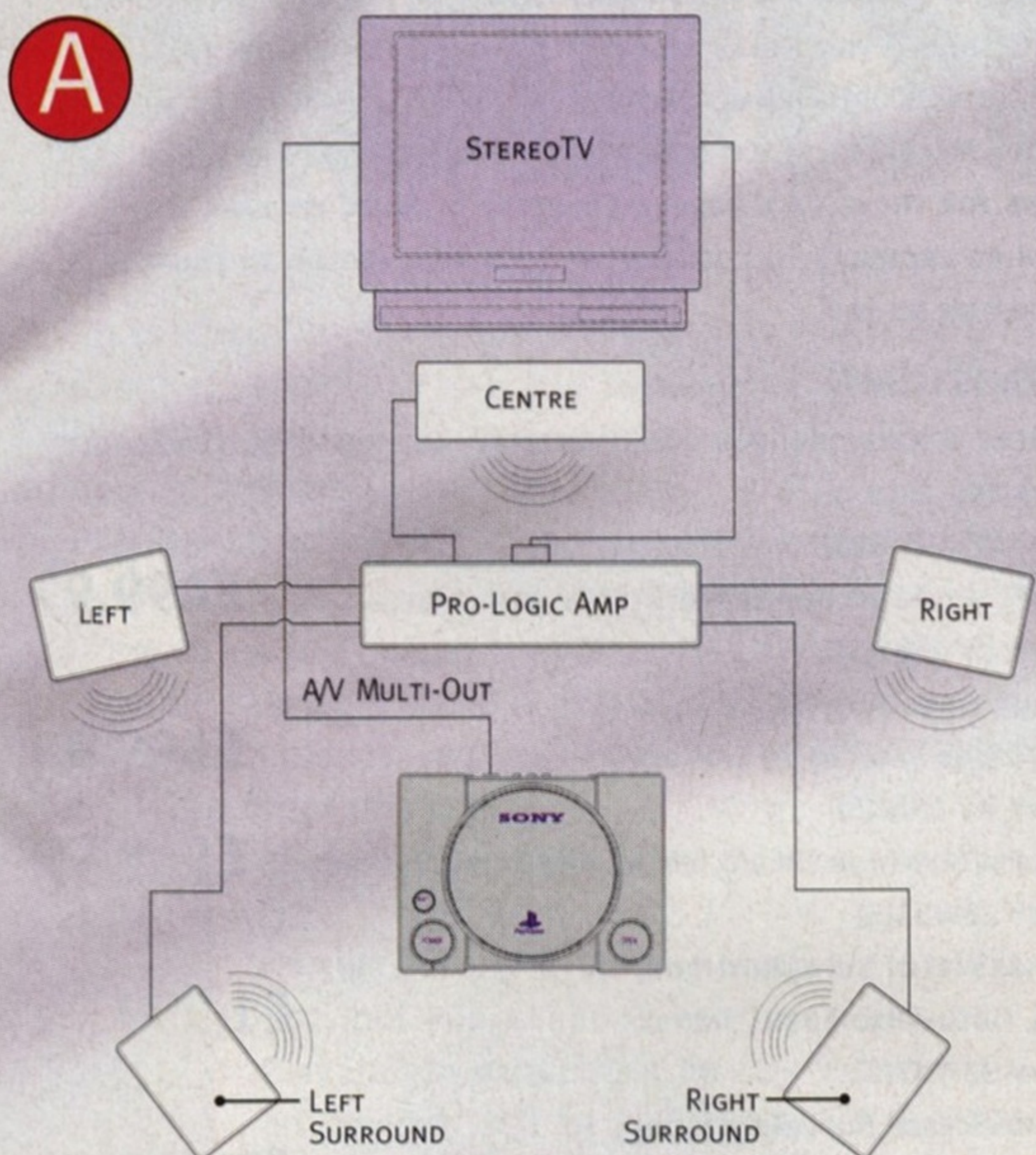
METHOD (B) IS SLIGHTLY MORE CUMBERSOME, BUT ALLOWS YOU TO STILL GET THE BEST SOUND POSSIBLE IF YOU DON'T HAVE A STEREO TELEVISION. THIS METHOD SIMPLY CONNECTS THE AUDIO OUTPUT FROM THE PLAYSTATION DIRECTLY TO A HI-FI. BOTH THESE SET-UPS ILLUSTRATE A FULL FIVE SPEAKER PRO-LOGIC SET-UP, BUT OF COURSE USING ANY HI-FI WILL STILL BE SEVERAL TIMES BETTER THAN JUST THE SOUND STRAIGHT FROM A TELEVISION.

FINALLY, WHEN USING A MULTI-SPEAKER SET-UP, ALWAYS TRY TO ENSURE THAT EACH LEFT/RIGHT PAIR IS EQUIDISTANT FROM YOU AS YOU PLAY, OR ELSE YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO JUDGE THE CORRECT 'DISTANCE' THE SOUNDS ARE COMING FROM IN THE SPATIAL FIELD.

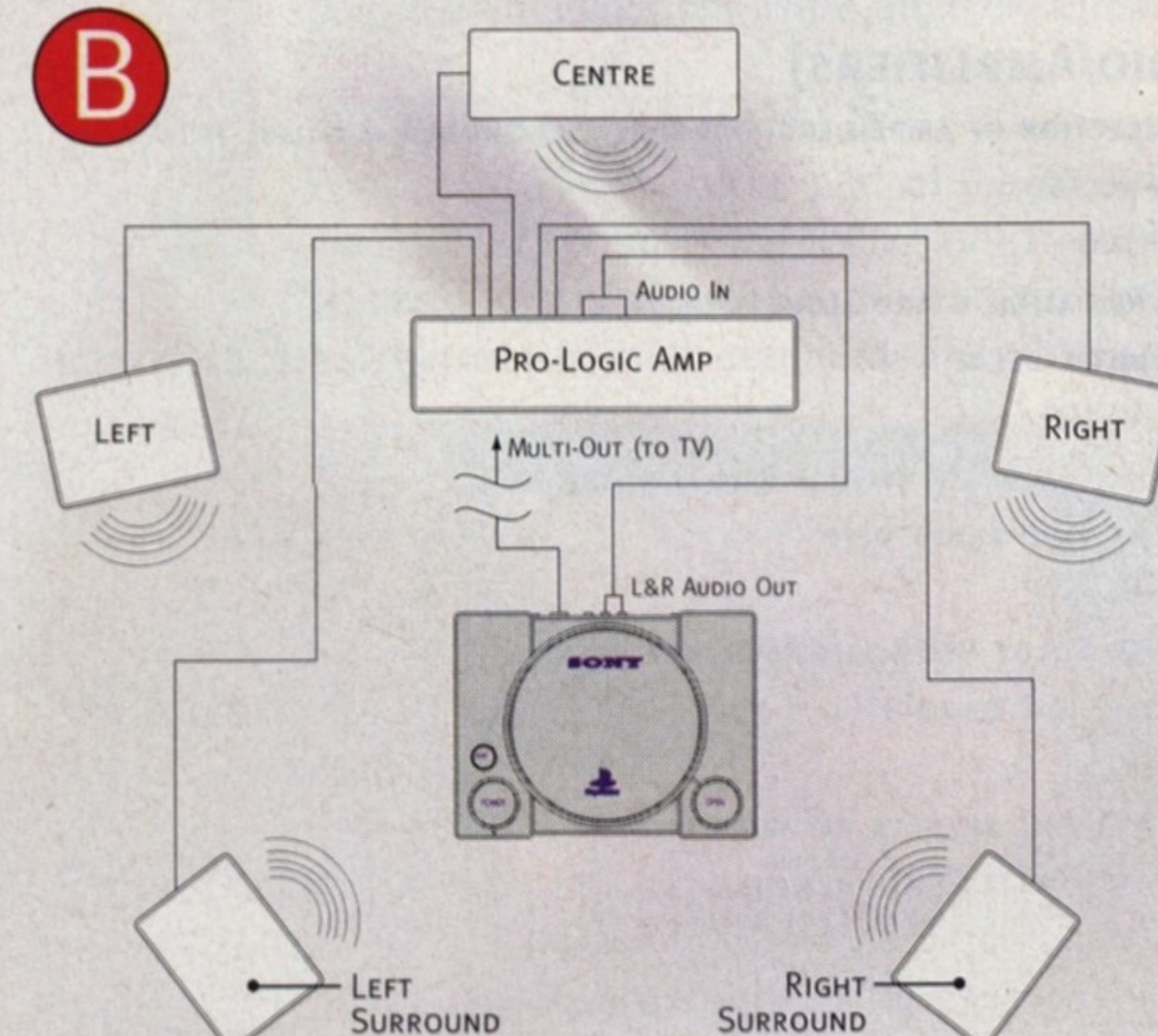
The next step up from a standard hi-fi is to get your PlayStation hooked up to a system with surround sound. Before the advent of affordable Dolby Pro-Logic systems, many hi-fis allowed for a surround sound facility using a four speaker set-up. In a sense these systems weren't true surround sound in that the rear speakers only emulated the front speakers albeit slightly out of phase to give a more expansive sound field. Where the real action lies, so to speak, is of course with Pro-Logic. This sound system when fully set-up comprises of five speakers, including two front and two rear left/right pairs, plus a central front speaker. The sound from games such as *The Need for Speed*, *Krazy Ivan* and others, have been encoded with Dolby Pro-Logic Surround sound meaning that these games immerse you in a wrap-around sound-sphere. Just imagine using the sound in *Krazy Ivan* to determine where your next assailant is coming from, just as you would in real life...



A



B



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AND THERE'S NO BETTER
PLACE THAN RIGHT HERE IN
PLAY!**

THE BIG GAME

SOUL EDGE

22 Every month we take the hottest game of the moment, be it at news, preview or review stage and go completely bonkers over it! Up to ten pages can be devoted to the game we think is going to be absolutely flipping massive, and every aspect of it will be explained in full. This month, *Soul Edge*, the coin-op perfect beat-'em-up which aims to give *Tekken 2* a run for its money.



90-100

If a game scores this highly it's an essential purchase and receives the PLAY Classic logo as a stamp of approval.

85-93

We recommend these games as they are fun, lasting and value for money.

75-84

A decent, solid and dependable game which offers good value for money and won't disappoint fans of the

genre. There are some gameplay flaws, but nothing serious.

50-75

These are average games that may be entertaining but are fundamentally flawed or don't have any lasting appeal.

30-50

Games that should be avoided by everyone except die-hard fans of the genre and masochists.

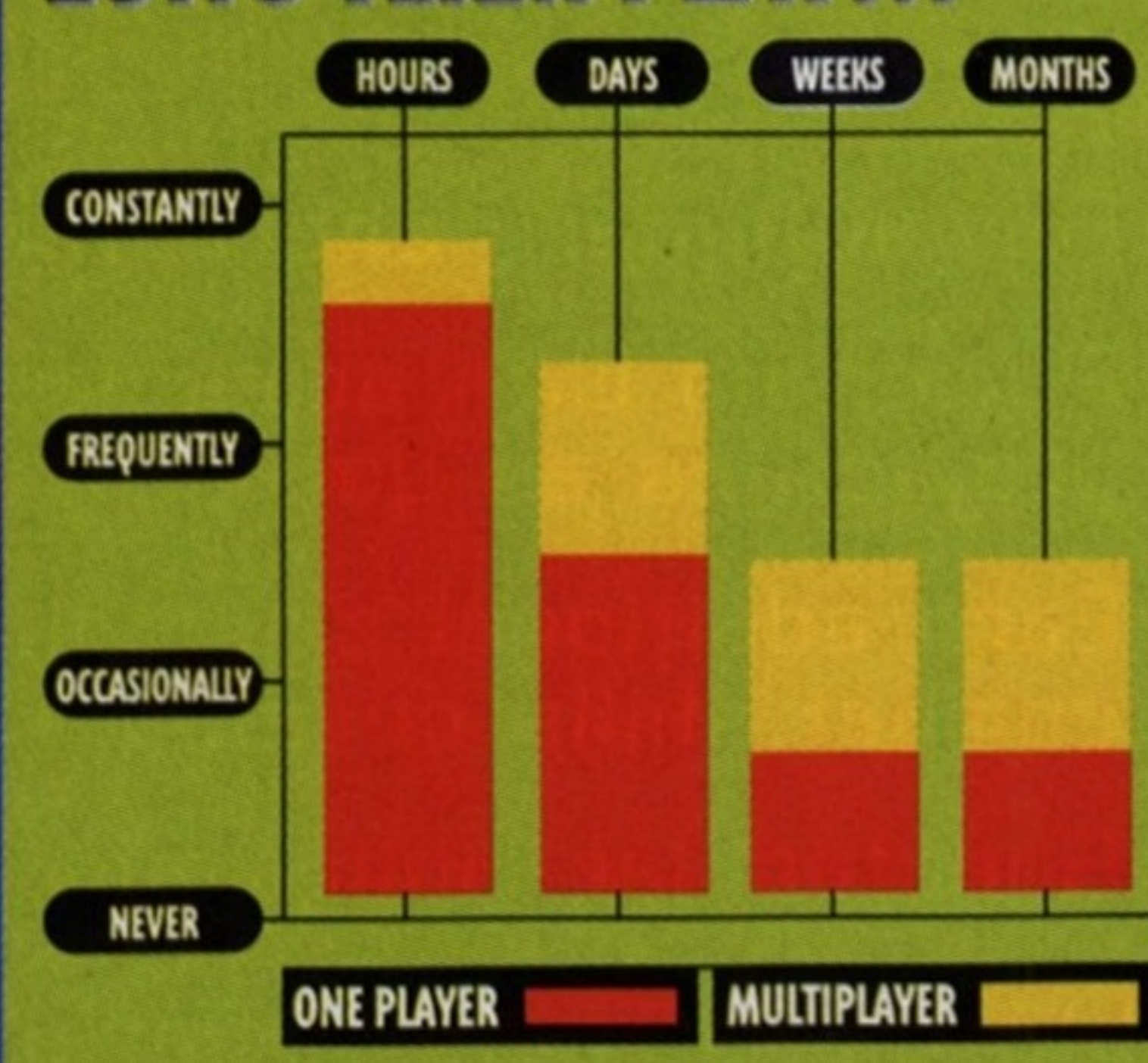
0-30

Complete tripe. Avoid at all costs!

CHALLENGE BOX

This clever little box is designed to show you instantly how long a game will last (in our opinion) based on the review. The one player game (in red) will more often than not be lower than multiple players because it's more fun playing a friend than the computer. Although it is entirely subjective, we hope it gives you a rough guide to a game's lifespan.

LONG TERM PLAY...



ES

REVIEWS • WORKSTATIONS • WIRED UPS

PLAY ICONS

These symbols are designed to give you vital information about the maximum number of players and whether or not you can use a specific device with the game. Special controllers such as the Mad Katz steering wheel or the NegCom joypad come under steering/analogue and this will include all new pads and controllers.



ONE PLAYER
EG PROJECT OVERKILL



MULTIPLE PLAYERS
EG TEKKEN 2



STEERING/ANALOGUE
EG MAD KATZ WHEEL



MULTI-TAP
COMPATIBLE



MOUSE
COMPATIBLE



MEMORY CARD
(FOR SAVE GAMES)



SPLIT SCREEN
EG BUST-A-MOVE 2



LINK CABLE
EG NEED FOR SPEED

WORKSTATIONS

 You want in-depth features on the latest software? You got it! In our exclusive WorkStations this month we've got all the goss on four new games.

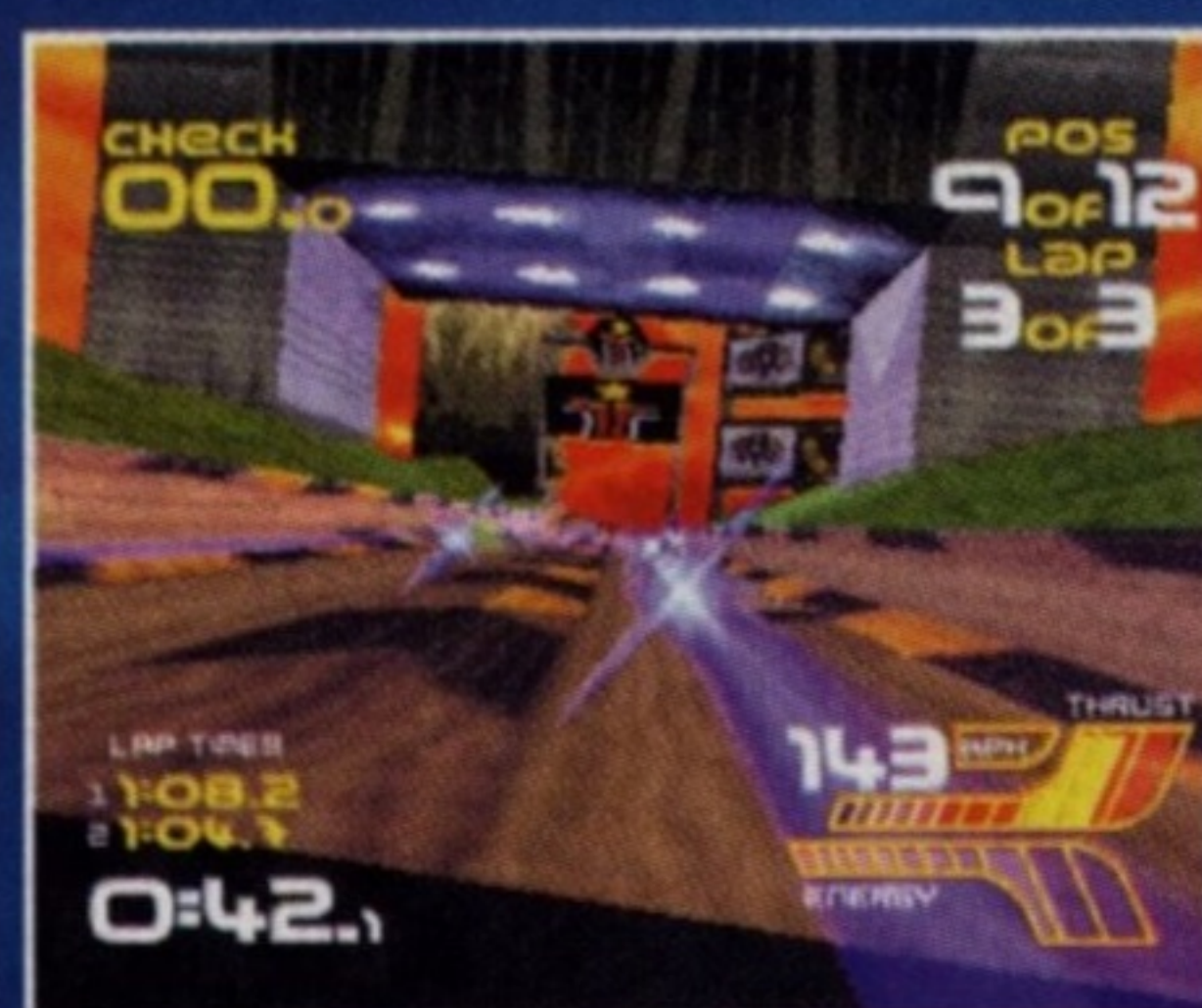
PROJECT OVERKILL	30
CRASH BANDICOOT	36
FIRO & KLAWD	38



WIRED UP

 We bring you all the PlayStation previews before everyone else. This month we've got a corking collection of games destined to be classics (maybe)!

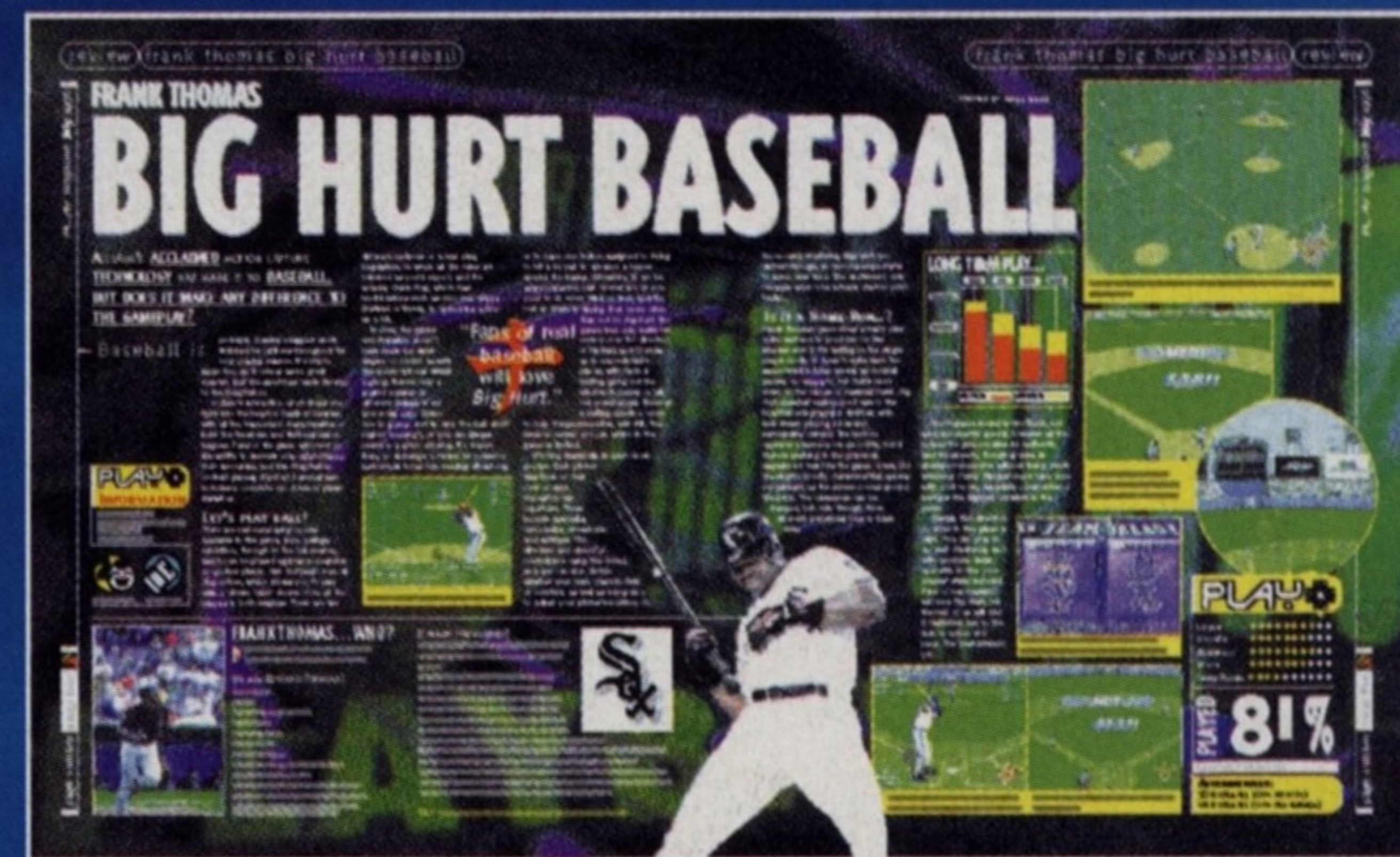
WPEOUT 2097	84
VIRTUAL OPEN TENNIS	86
CENTER COURT	87
DESTRUCTION DERBY 2	88
AQUANAUTS	89



PLAY REVIEWS

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OLYMPIC GAMES	42
TRACK & FIELD	45
FADE TO BLACK	54
OLYMPIC SOCCER	58
TOP GUN	60
BIG HURT BASEBALL	64
SAMPRAS EXTREME	66
VIRTUAL GOLF	68
NFL QB CLUB	70
A-TRAIN	72
CHEESY	74



feature soul edge

PLAY magazine July 1996

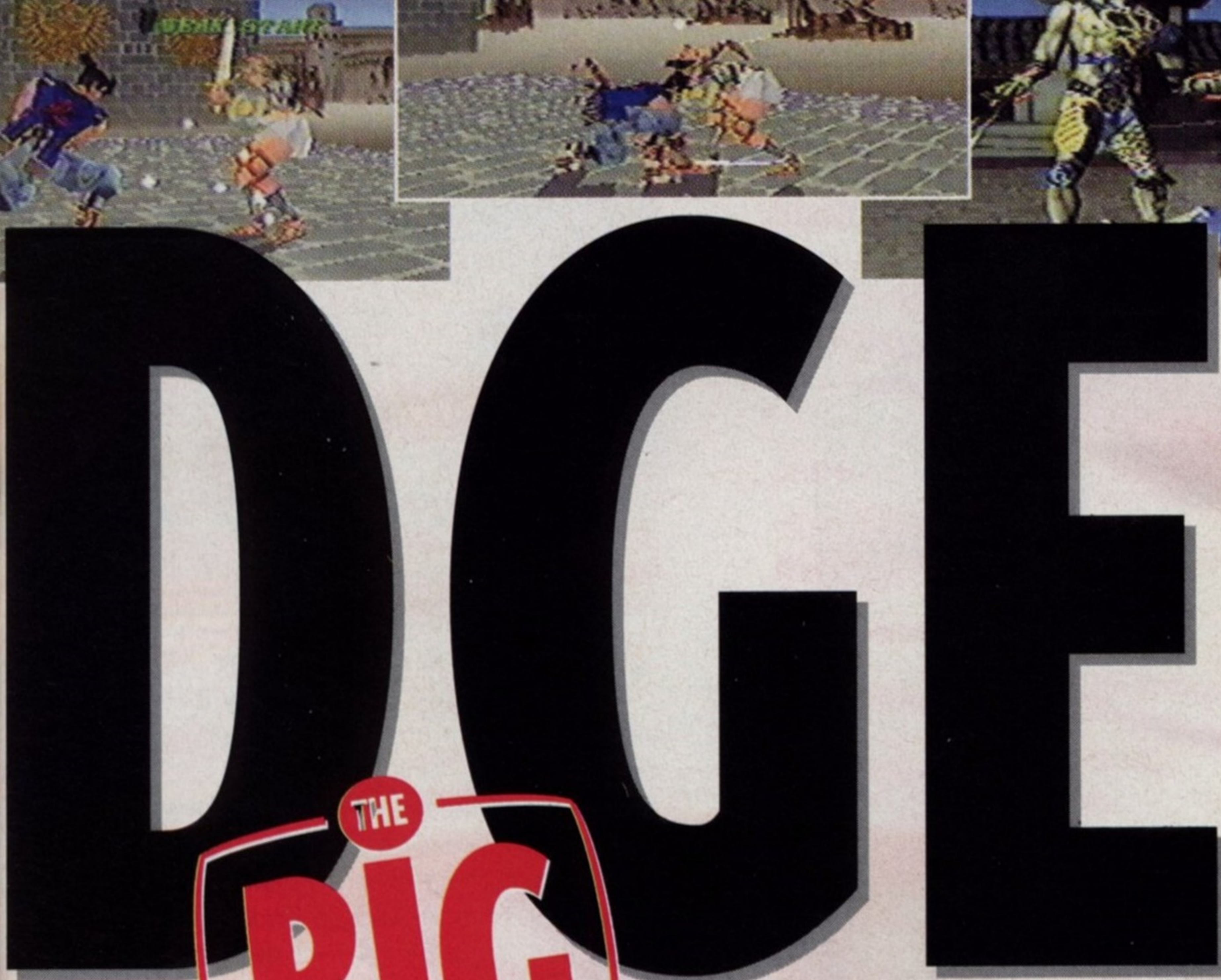
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION

BEYOND *TEKKEN 2* — THAT'S QUITE A STATEMENT TO LIVE UP TO. IN THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES, PLAY GOES ON THE ATTACK. OVER THE NEXT FIVE PAGES YOU'LL DISCOVER EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT *SOUL EDGE*.

Blueprint

Publisher: Sony Computer
Entertainment Europe
Developer: Namco Japan
% Complete: 40%
Exp. Release Date: December '96
Origin: Japan
No of Players: 1-2

page number twenty two 22



THE
BIG
GAME



[ABOVE] Here's where the ability to side-step, move, roll, get the hell out of the way of that flippin' monster-sized axe comes in pretty handy. Voldo, having dodged Rock's swipe, can put the boot in. Yes.

Slamming

your rival around the back of the head with a perfectly executed roundhouse kick is one of the great pleasures of playing beat-'em-ups, so slicing said assailant in half with a razor-sharp samurai sword should be double the fun. So far, on the PlayStation, it hasn't been.

The weapon-brandishing stars of *Toshinden* and *Criticom* are all fun to play with, but no match for the martial arts of *Tekken*, let alone the awesome *Tekken 2* (which, incidentally, PAL gamers still have to wait another three months for – frustrating, isn't it?). Those masters of PlayStation coin-op conversions, and the jewel in the crown of Sony's own label titles, Namco, is going to put all this right.

Before we continue, it must be made clear, that whilst the PLAY team is thrilled to death at the prospect of a pre-Christmas release for *Soul Edge*, we would unreservedly recommend that PAL PlayStation owners buy the September release, *Tekken 2*. After reading this article, some may convince themselves to wait that little bit longer for *Soul Edge*, but although it's planned for this year, this is no guarantee the firm will meet its target. The awesome graphics may take a little longer to re-produce – it is, after all, perhaps the most ambitious arcade conversion any firm has ever attempted.

Although the game is a product of Namco's System 11 board, *Soul Edge* is actually being programmed from scratch on the PlayStation. Namco's manager of development, Hajime Nakatini, is already on record as stating



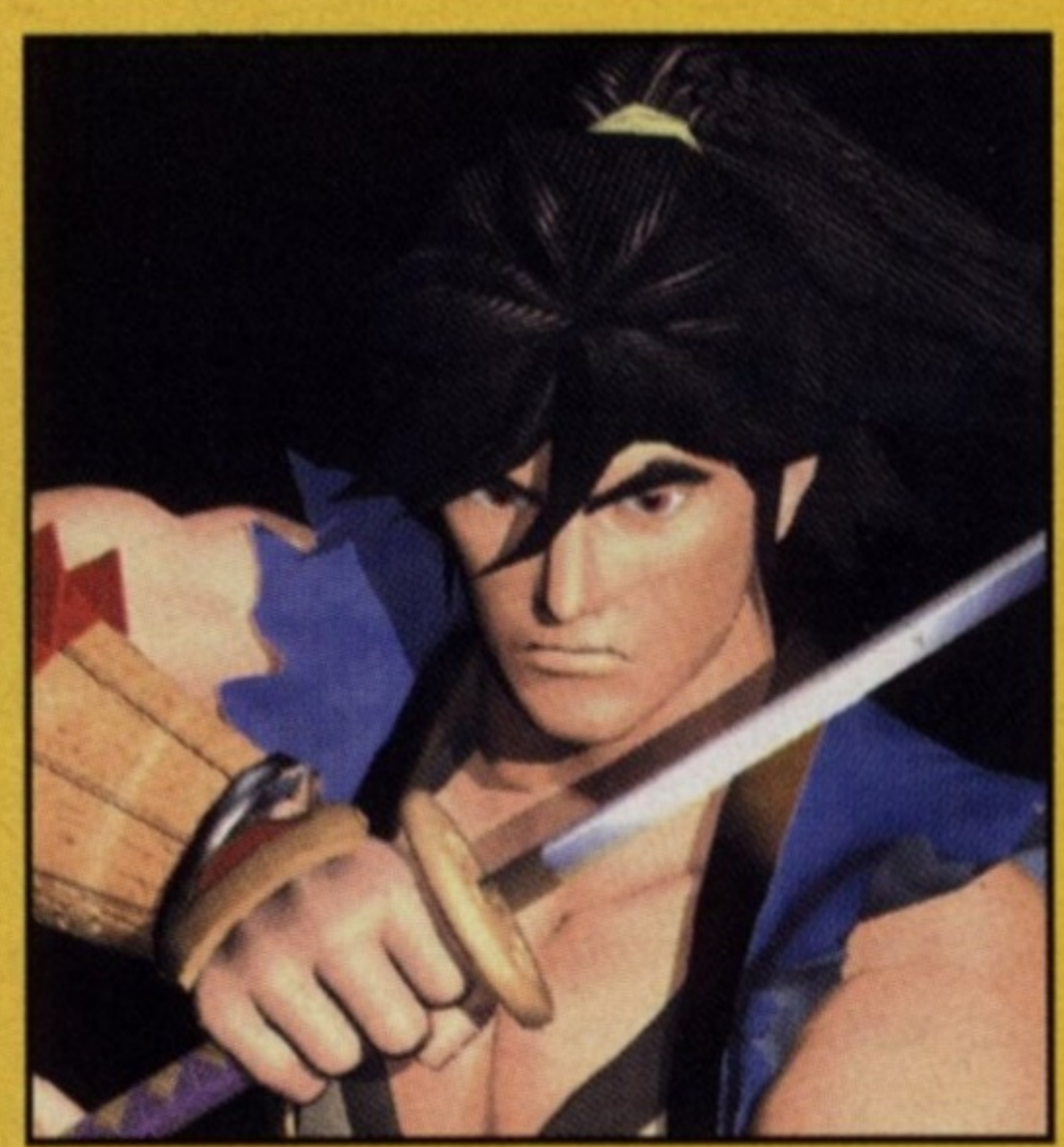
soul edge feature

SOUL SEARCHERS

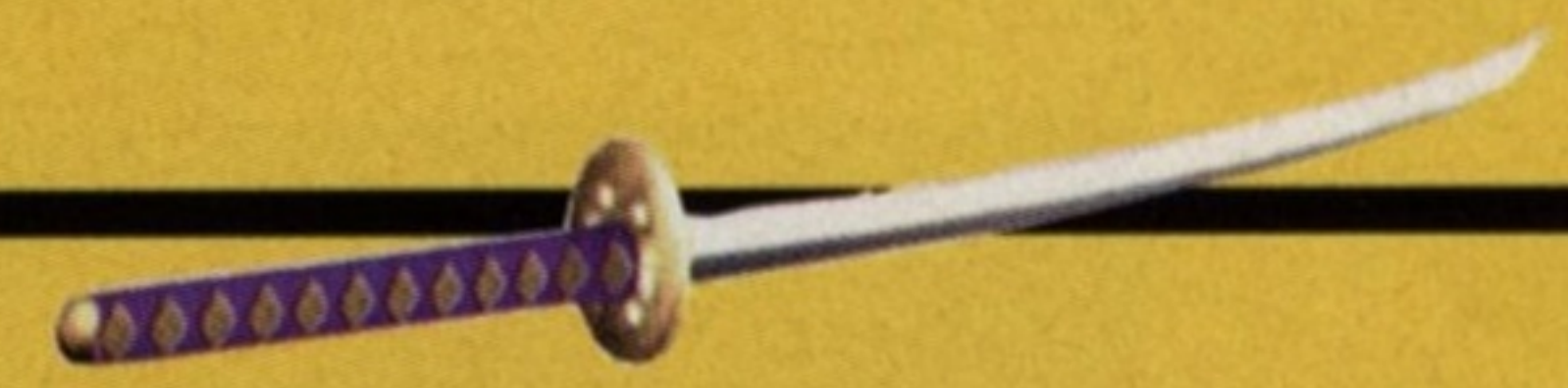
A GAME WITH THIS KIND OF REALISM BEGS FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION. THE CHARACTERS IN *SOUL EDGE* HAVE VERY DIFFERENT STYLES AND MOVES (NUMBERING FROM 33 FOR BOTH MITSURUGI AND ROCK TO 57 FOR TAKI!). PLAY DELVES INTO THEIR BACKGROUNDS TO GIVE YOU THE FULL RUNDOWN ON WHICH OF THE CHARACTERS YOU'LL WANT TO FIGHT WITH.

[MITSURUGI SEISHIRO]

GENDER: MALE
NATIONALITY: JAPANESE
AGE: 22
FAMILY: DECEASED
WEAPON: KATANA (STRAIGHT BLADE)
FIGHTING STYLE: HIS OWN BRAND OF SWORDPLAY
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 33
STAGE: THE NOSHIMA-JO CASTLE
AURA: OBSESSIVE LONER
HISTORY: FACED WITH THE CRISIS OF HIS PARENTS DYING WHEN HE WAS 15, THE GRIM REALITIES OF



BEING A PEASANT IN 16TH CENTURY JAPAN SOON TAUGHT MITSURUGI THAT HIS LIFE WOULD BE EASIER IF HE WERE TO "TRAMPLE, RATHER THAN BE TRAMPLED ON." HE QUICKLY MASTERED THE LIMB-CUTTING BLADE, RATHER THAN THE CORN-CUTTING SCYTHE AND, HIRING HIMSELF OUT AS A MERCENARY, BUILT THE KIND OF REPUTATION WHICH WOULD INTIMIDATE EVEN THE HARDEST GLASGOW VILLAIN. THEN, TECHNOLOGY OVERTOOK HIS ART, THE RIFLE WAS INTRODUCED TO HIS HOMELAND AND, WELL, EVEN SAMURAI'S HAVE TO THINK TWICE WHEN THEY'RE STARING DOWN THE BARREL OF A GUN. THE IDEA OF AN INVINCIBLE SWORD, THE SOUL EDGE, AND THE CHANCE TO PROVE THAT STEEL CAN MASTER LEAD HAS MADE MITSURUGI MAD WITH DESIRE. HE WANTS IT, HE WANTS IT BAD.



[SEUNG MI NA]

GENDER: FEMALE
NATIONALITY: KOREAN
AGE: 16
FAMILY: FATHER (SEUNG HAN MYONG)
WEAPON: ZHAN-MA DAO
FIGHTING STYLE: SEUNG LONG BLADE
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 47!
STAGE: UNNAMED-HISTORIC TEMPLE
AURA: BABY-FACED BERSERKER
HISTORY: BORN THE DAUGHTER OF THE STRICT SEUNG HAN MYONG, A

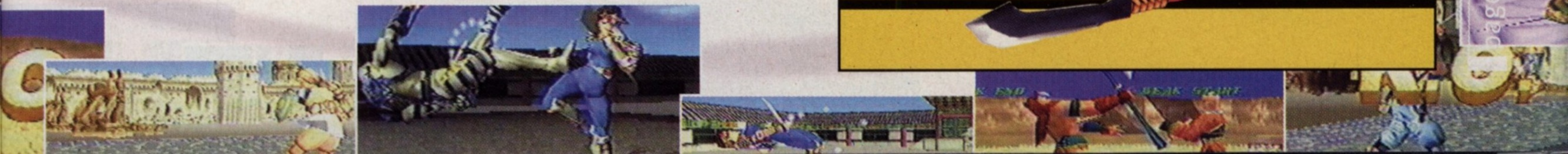


MASTER IN THE USE OF LONG, BLADED ARMS, SEUNG MI NA QUICKLY MADE AN IMPRESSION ON THE BOYS OF HER VILLAGE – MOSTLY BY SMASHING THEIR HEADS IN WITH A STAFF IF THEY TRIED IT ON! LITHE AND LIVELY, SEUNG MI NA IS ALSO A BIT HEADSTRONG, SO MUCH SO IN FACT THAT WHEN HER COUNTRY BEGAN PREPARING DEFENCES IN FEAR OF A POSSIBLE JAPANESE INVASION, SHE DISOBEYED HER FATHER AND LEFT TO FIND THE SOUL EDGE. SHE'D HEARD THAT THIS WAS THE SWORD OF SALVATION WITH WHICH SHE COULD SAVE HER HOMELAND, AND THE MERE FACT THAT THE SEUNG'S HAD ALREADY SENT THEIR BEST SCRAPPER, ONE HWANG SUNG KYUNG, AFTER THIS MYTHICAL SWORD WASN'T GOING TO STOP OUR MI NA. THE WORD IS, SHE EVEN FLATTENED HER FATHER WHEN HE TRIED TO STOP HER. SOUNDS LIKE THE GIRL MEANS BUSINESS.



PLAY magazine July 1996

page number twenty three



[TAKI]

GENDER: FEMALE
NATIONALITY: JAPANESE
AGE: 22
FAMILY: DECEASED
WEAPON: KATANA (CURVED BLADE)
FIGHTING STYLE: NINJA
SWORDSWOMAN
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 57
STAGE: A SEALED SHRINE SET IN A BAMBOO FOREST
AURA: BROODING, MYSTERIOUS
HISTORY: LOOK PAST THE BLACK ROBES AND THE FANCY WEAPONS AND YOU'D FIND YER AVERAGE NINJA CHOSE TO



USE THEIR SPECIALLY-ENDOWNED SPIRITUAL POWERS BY PULLING DOWN A COMFORTABLE LIVING PROTECTING THEIR CLAN AGAINST EVIL SPIRITS. NOT TAKI. SHE DECIDED TO GO OFF TOURING THE LAND, EXORCISING ANY DEMONS OR PHANTOMS WHICH WERE BOTHERING THE LOCAL POPULACE. A LITTLE DEMON HERSELF WITH A HAMMER, AN ANVIL AND A LUMP OF STEEL, TAKI MAKES ALL HER OWN WEAPONRY, INCLUDING HER KATANA, "REKKI-MARU" (DEMON SLAYER IN ENGLISH), WITHIN WHICH SHE'S INVESTED SOME OF HER POWER. ON ONE SUCH OUTING, TAKI ENCOUNTERED A STRANGE SPIRIT WHICH GAVE HER SWORD STRANGE PROPERTIES. CONVINCED THIS IS SOMEHOW RELATED TO THE FABLED SOUL EDGE, TAKI IS DETERMINED TO TRACK THE SWORD DOWN AND DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF ITS MAGIC PROPERTIES.



[LI LONG]

GENDER: MALE
NATIONALITY: CHINESE
AGE: 24
FAMILY: MEI MEI (YOUNGER SISTER)
WEAPON: NUNCHAKAS
FIGHTING STYLE: MATCHLESS
DRAGON
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 45
STAGE: THE UPPER CHANG JIANG RIVER
AURA: FULL OF CONTROLLED FURY
HISTORY: LI IS QUITE REFRESHING REALLY, AS HE ORIGINALLY DIDN'T GIVE A STUFF FOR THE SOUL EDGE



UNTIL A GIRL (CHIE) WHO SAVED HIS LIFE WAS BRUTALLY HACKED DOWN BY A LONE SWORDSMAN WHO SOUNDS SUSPICIOUSLY LIKE MITSURUGI. AN ASSASSIN BY TRADE, AND RATHER GOOD AT IT, LI HAD BEEN SENT TO JAPAN BY HIS EMPEROR TO KILL AS MANY OF THE BEST SWORDSMEN OF THE JAPANESE PIRATES CURRENTLY ATTACKING CHINESE COASTAL TOWNS AS HE CAN. LI'S ALSO BEEN GIVEN A SECONDARY BRIEF TO SEE IF HE CAN FIND THE SOUL EDGE, BUT REALLY WASN'T THAT FUSSED UNTIL THE CHIE INCIDENT. HAVING HEARD THE WORD THAT MITSURUGI, REGARDED AS THE BEST OF THE TYPE OF SWORDSMEN WHO KILLED CHIE, IS ALSO OUT LOOKING FOR THE SOUL EDGE, AND WHY, LI HAS DEVOTED HIMSELF TO FINDING THE SWORD AND MURDERING MITSURUGI AND ALL HIS KIND WITH THE SOUL EDGE.



[ABOVE] This is the "pushing at sword guards" situation which can trigger off lots of counters.



that "The conversion isn't going to be easy. Usually it takes a maximum of six months, but different factors come into play depending on the game and the team involved. For *Soul Edge*, because the game's graphics are a very important element, even more so than *Tekken*, the conversion would be much harder to do."

We might have to wait a while yet then, but if you're not a regular visitor to Mighty Moe's majestic Emporium Of Arcade Delights, or some such seaside arcade venue, you might well be asking the question, what is it we're waiting for? Read on...

AT THE CUTTING EDGE

Soul Edge, quite simply, is the Next Big Thing in 3-D beat-'em-ups, taking both graphics AND gameplay one step further.

HOW DO THEY DO THAT?

JUST HOW DOES GAMES DESIGN WORK? WHAT DO THE DESIGNERS DO TO DEFINE THIS MYSTERIOUS THING WE CALL GAMEPLAY? HERE WE'VE LOOKED AT THE SITUATION IN *SOUL EDGE*, WHERE THE PROGRAM DECIDES WHICH CHARACTER HAS THE SUCCESSFUL ATTACK WHEN BOTH ATTACK AT THE SAME TIME.

WHEN TWO ARMED ATTACKS ARE:

1. DESIGNATED TO BE "PUSHING AT SWORD GUARDS" AND
2. HAVE THE ATTRIBUTE OF CONTRARY ATTACKING DIRECTIONS AND THEY
3. HIT EACH OTHER AT THE SAME TIME, THEY WILL ENTER "PUSHING AT SWORD GUARDS"

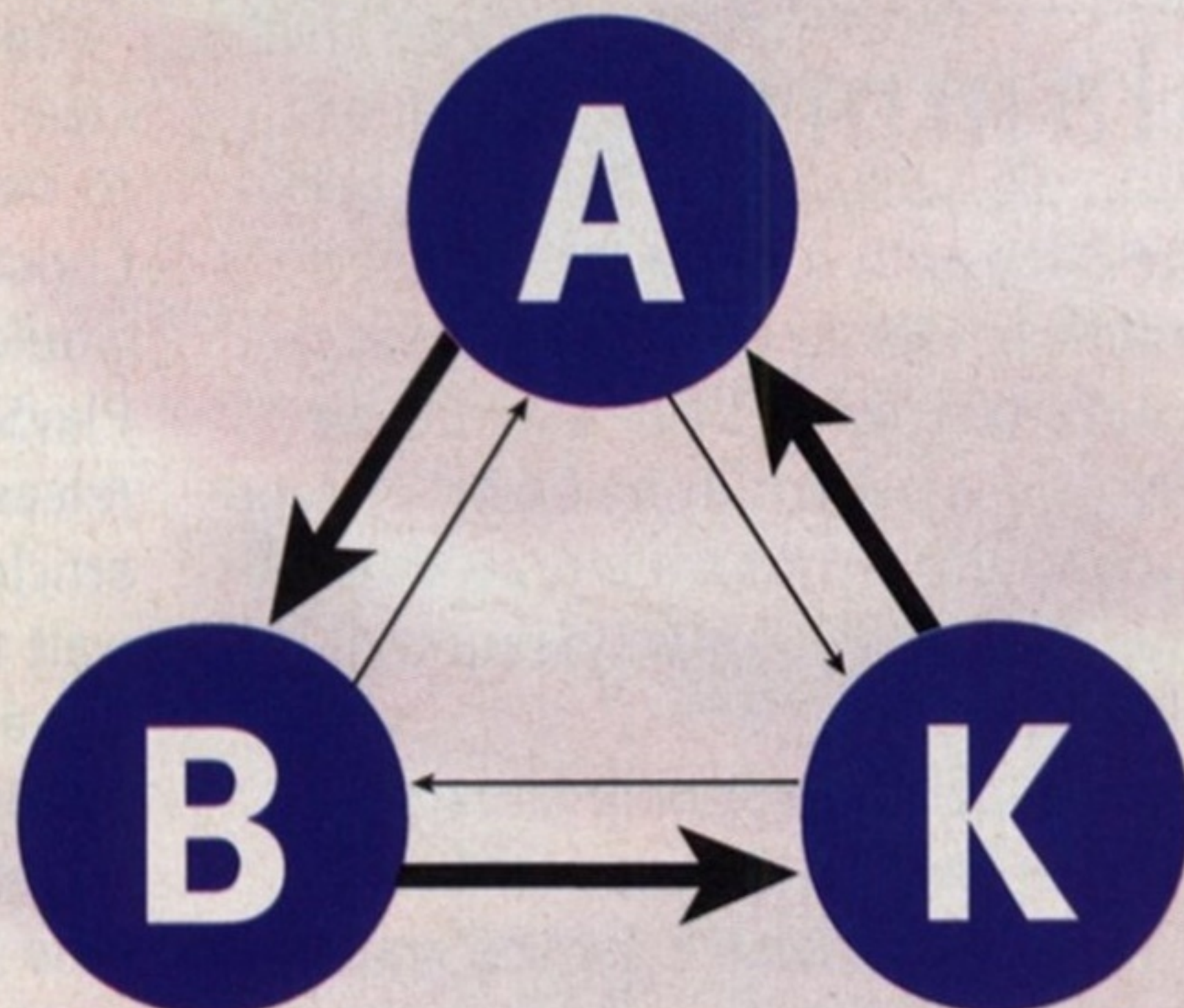
WHEN TWO CHARACTERS STEP IN AT THE SAME TIME AT A CERTAIN INTERVAL, THEY ALSO ENTER "PUSHING AT SWORD GUARDS" THIS CHART SHOWS WHO WILL WIN IF EACH PLAYER TRIES A DIFFERENT MOVE IN A DEADLOCK SITUATION.

[ATTACKS FROM "PUSHING AT SWORD GUARDS" SITUATION]

THERE ARE THREE OF THESE ATTACKS WHICH ARE COMMON TO ALL THE CHARACTERS

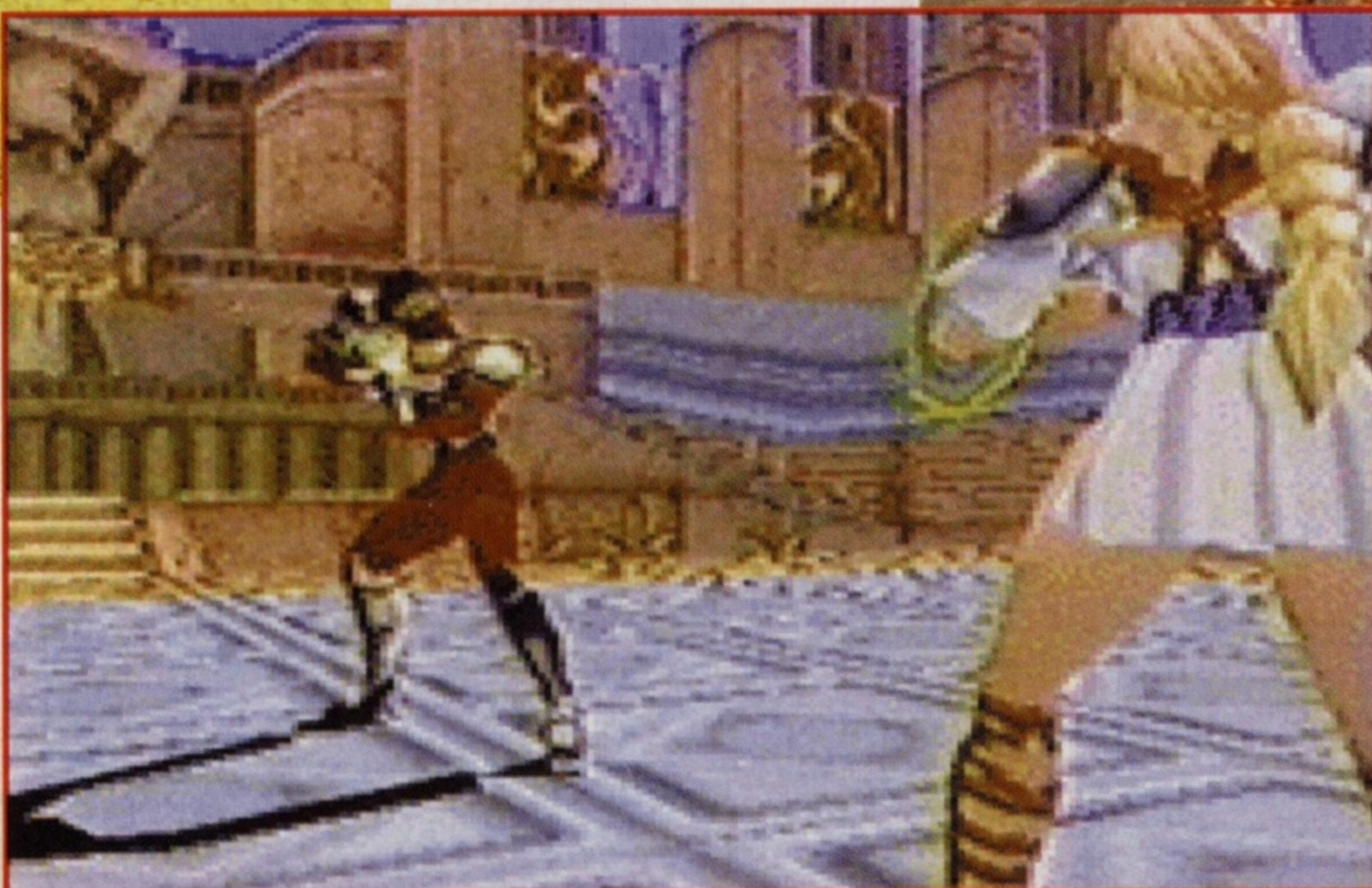
- A. ARMED ATTACK TO THE UPPER PART
- B. ARMED ATTACK TO THE MIDDLE PART
- K. KICK TO LOWER PART

CORRELATION OF EACH ATTACK IS:



WIN → LOSE

CLEVER, ISN'T IT?



[ABOVE] Ooh, girls having a scrap. Someone should do a game called *Bikini Mud Wrestling Killer Bimbos Of The Planet Playtex*, now that would be a killer game. But probably still not as good as Sophita's legs.

Look, when you play the thing, you'll end up sweating like a sex offender who's found himself in the dock of Judge Castratem. Or, perhaps furtively glancing over your shoulder for the Adrenaline police, convincing yourself you must have done something wrong, because nothing legal can be this much fun.

Soul Edge is set in 16th Century Japan, evidently a violent time with the country beset by civil wars, coastal towns besieged by foreign warlords, and an influx of European explorers, mercenaries and "merchants" out to plunder the treasures of the Orient. At a time when the blade was beginning to be mastered by the bullet, the myth of the Soul Edge, an invincible sword, proves too much of a lure for our eight fighting heroes...

It's a nice story, but to be honest, although plots are interesting and enjoyable to read, as you can appreciate later on in this article, they're not the key to games, are they? *Soul Edge* is important because of how it's been presented, and how it plays. In a nutshell, *Soul Edge* is *Tekken 2* with weapons.

ON GUARD

For instance, six of the eight characters (Taki and Li Long don't) use their various instruments of destruction to protect themselves, they use them to guard. Instead of simply pulling back or hitting a button to block, here defence can be turned into attack. It's like parrying a sword thrust and then getting in one of your own before your attacker has time to recover.



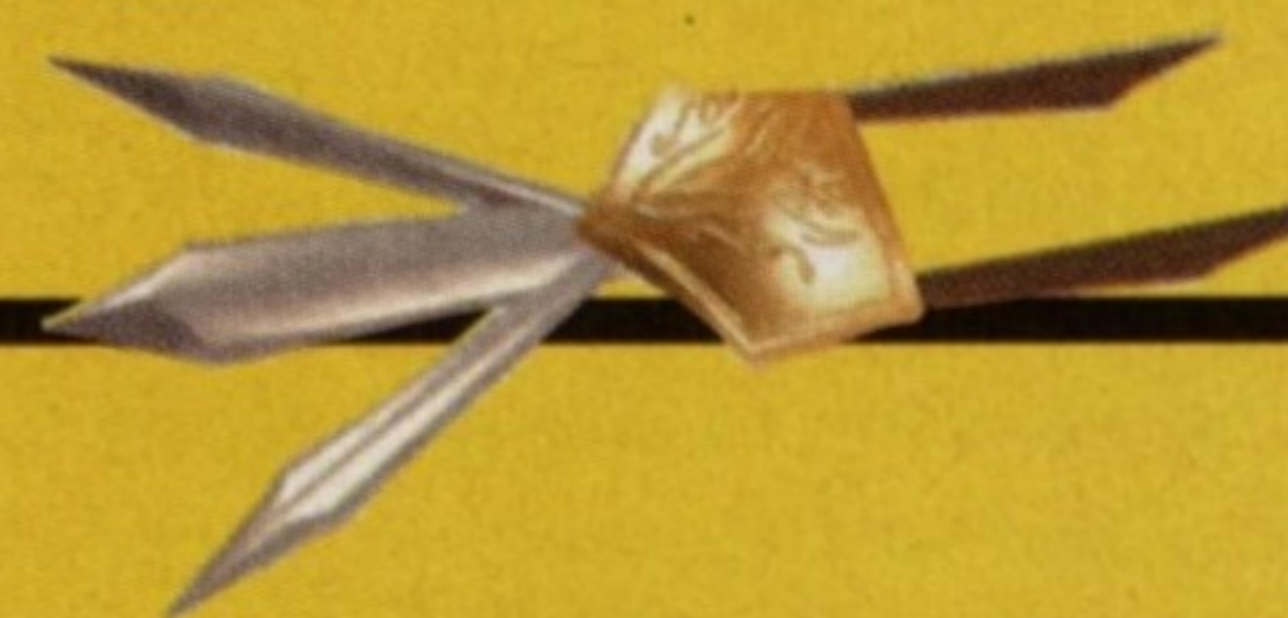
[BELOW] Can you believe the depths of these backgrounds, and this is, like, how complete?



[VOLDO]

GENDER: MALE
NATIONALITY: ITALIAN
AGE: 43
FAMILY: DECEASED
WEAPON: KATAR
FIGHTING STYLE: ALL HIS OWN
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 44
STAGE: AN UNDERGROUND FORTRESS CALLED THE MONEY PIT
AURA: DANGEROUS LUNATIC
HISTORY: BIT OF A NUTCASE, IS VOLDO. THEN AGAIN, IF YOU'D GONE THROUGH WHAT HE'S ENDURED, YOU'D

PROBABLY BE ONE PRONG SHORT OF A TRIDENT YOURSELF! THE HEAVILY-ARMoured VOLDO IS THE LAST MAN ALIVE OF A LARGE CONVOY FUNDED AND LED BY A CASH-CRAZY ITALIAN MERCHANT BY THE NAME OF VERCCI. HAVING DONE THE SELL ARMS TO WARRING EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS AND MAKE A KILLING THING, VERCCI BECAME INTRIGUED BY THE MYSTERIES OF THE FAR EAST, PARTICULARLY THIS AWESOME WEAPON BY THE NAME OF SOUL EDGE. ONE THING LEAD TO ANOTHER AND VERCCI, AIDED ONLY BY A MASSIVE PILE OF GOLD AND A LARGE RETINUE (INCLUDING VOLDO), TOOK OFF ON THE QUEST TO FIND SOUL EDGE... COMING TO A TRAGIC END IN THE PROCESS AT THE BOTTOM OF A LARGE PIT HE'D DUG TO KEEP HIS MONEY IN. HIS FAITHFUL ASSISTANT, VOLDO, DRIVEN MAD BY HIS YEARS TRAPPED IN THE MONEY PIT HAS VOWED TO CONTINUE HIS MASTER'S QUEST.



[SOPHITA ALEXANDRA]

GENDER: FEMALE
NATIONALITY: GREEK
AGE: 18
FAMILY: ACHELOUS (FATHER), NIKE (MOTHER), CASSANDRA (YOUNGER SISTER) AND LUCIUS (YOUNGER BROTHER).
WEAPONS: SHORT SWORD AND SHIELD
FIGHTING STYLE: ATHENIAN
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 46
STAGE: THE EURYDICE SHRINE
AURA: ANGEL OF JUSTICE
HISTORY: A HUMBLE BAKER'S DAUGHTER, BUT A DEVOUT BELIEVER IN THE ANCIENT GODS OF GREECE LEGEND, SOPHITA IS ONE OF THE FEW CHARACTERS WHO TRULY UNDERSTANDS HOW EVIL THE SOUL EDGE IS. WELL, AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT THE GREEK GODS HAVE TOLD HER, AND THAT SHE MUST SEEK IT OUT AND DESTROY IT TO STOP ITS EVIL POWER ENDANGERING THE WORLD. (OR, IF YOU WANT TO BE CYNICAL ABOUT IT, IT SEEMS MORE LIKELY THAT THE GODS WANT THAT PARTICULAR WEAPON AND ALL ITS SPIRITUAL POWERS DESTROYED TO STOP IT FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF SOMEONE WHO COULD THEN MAKE LIFE VERY DIFFICULT FOR YOUR AVERAGE GREEK GOD). ANYWAY, ARMED WITH A SWORD AND SHIELD GIVEN TO HER ESPECIALLY BY HEPHAETUS (MYTHICAL GOD OF SMITHS, APPARENTLY), THIS GREEK BLONDE BOMBSHELL SHOULD TURN QUITE A FEW HEADS WHEN SHE WALKS BY - BEFORE SHE SLICES THEM OFF WITH HER SWORD. THAT IS.





[ABOVE] Siegfried (the blonde one who looks like he nicked his dad's spare sword), and Mitsurugi (the Samurai chap) try and out position each other before bringing their blade over the top for a crushing blow.



In the game, when the player blocks with his weapon, it takes a little damage to the special weapon energy bar. When this bar reaches zero, it is knocked away, leaving the character forced to continue with only his hands and fists – a bit of a disadvantage when you're faced with an opponent wielding an axe the size of America. Also, you can set up attacks through a successfully-timed block. Get it right and your character's parry staggers your opponent, giving you time to launch into a new offensive. The two characters which don't use their weapons to defend, suffer a little energy damage when blocking.

Being a 3-D game, it'll come as no surprise that in *Soul Edge* you can move in and out of the screen, like *Toshinden*, only instead of turning cartwheels to avoid blows, you're in effect side-stepping attacks (although you can choose to roll if you wish) and, if you get it right, you can immediately land one of your own blows before your opponent gets his/her bearings. Also, as long as it loses none of the features of its arcade big brother, it boasts throws to match those in any fighting game, including *Tekken 2*.

HEY, GOOD LOOKING

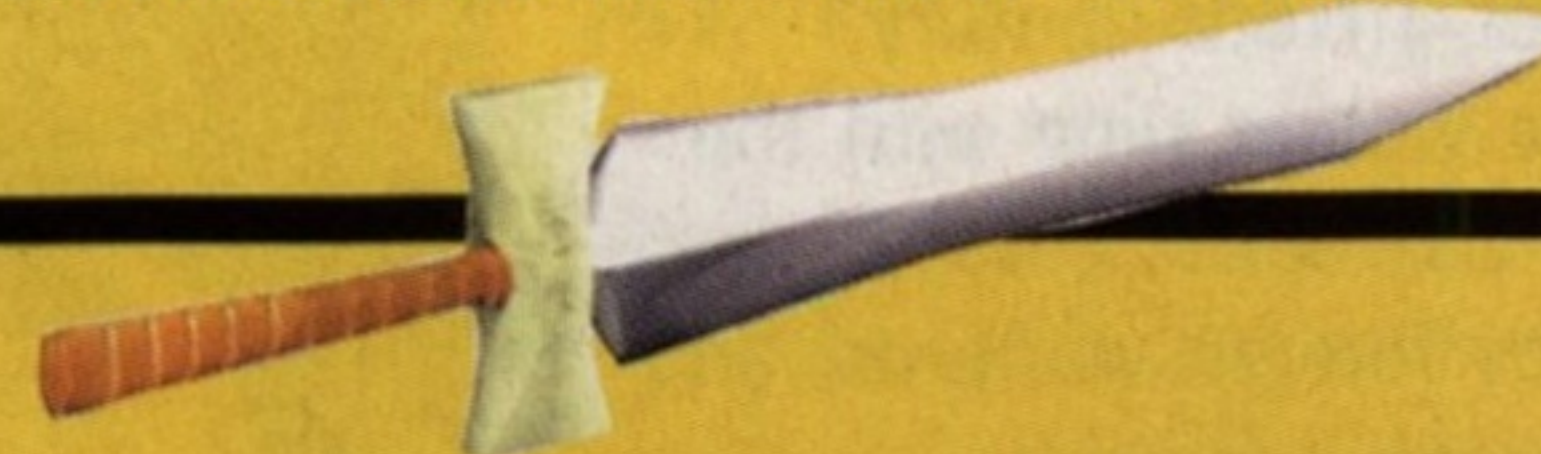
Graphically, the game promises to be better even than *Tekken 2*. Criticisms of the arcade unit for running at 30 frames per second instead of the 60 of *Tekken* mean very little when it comes to PlayStation conversions. Indeed, it's time to clear up the confusion about what frames per seconds means. Contrary to what some have said, 25 frames per second is fine. This means the screen updates 25 times in one second and refers to graphic speed not gameplay speed. Once a game is going at 25 fps (graphic interlacing can take this up to 50 fps, but this doesn't mean twice as quick, it's more to do with screen resolution) it's updating as fast as PAL TVs allow. And, of course, thanks to the introduction of Sony's new regulations on PAL conversions, the European conversion of *Soul Edge* will have to be fully optimised, meaning a silky-smooth, full screen PAL version. Yeah. All this and day-to-night transition in the true 3-D backdrops and gorgeous lighting effects and you've got a corker, my friend. C'mon Namco, get cracking and get it out for Christmas.

[SIEGFRIED SCHTAUFFEN]

GENDER: MALE
NATIONALITY: GERMAN
AGE: 16
FAMILY: MARGARET (MOTHER)
WEAPON: TWO HANDED-SWORD
FIGHTING STYLE: ALL HIS OWN
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 39
STAGE: OSTRHEINSBURG CASTLE
AURA: OBSESSIVE LUNATIC
HISTORY: INDEED, THIS IS A TRAGIC TALE. ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE LAND OF SOUTHERN GERMANY, A



YOUNG KNIGHT BY THE NAME OF FREDERICK STAYED AT AN INN, ENJOYING A NIGHT OF "SPIRITUAL HEALING" WITH A FAIR MAIDEN NAMED MARGARET. THE FRUIT OF THIS ONE KNIGHT STAND (BOOM, BOOM) WAS SIEGFRIED, AND FREDERICK DID FALL IN LOVE WITH MARGARET. ALL WELL AND GOOD SO FAR, BUT WITH HIS FATHER OFF CRUSADING UNDER THE NAME "THE GENTLE KNIGHT," SIEGFRIED FELL IN WITH A RIGHT BUNCH OF TEARAWAYS WHO CALLED THEMSELVES THE BLACKWIND, BECOMING THEIR BANDIT LEADER. DURING A NIGHT RAID ON A PASSING CONVOY, SIEGFRIED'S TRUSTY TWO-HANDED SWORD LOPPED THE HEAD OFF THE KNIGHT RIDING SHOTGUN – HIS DAD, UNFORTUNATELY. SIEGFRIED WENT MAD, CONVINCING HIMSELF THAT HIS FATHER HAD BEEN MURDERED BY SOMEONE ELSE. NOW, SIEGFRIED IS INTENT ON FINDING THE INVINCIBLE SWORD SOUL EDGE AND THEN TRACKING DOWN HIS FATHER'S KILLER.



[Rock]

GENDER: MALE
NATIONALITY: BRITISH/AMERICAN INDIAN
AGE: 35
FAMILY: LOST
WEAPON: BATTLE AXE
FIGHTING STYLE: ALL HIS OWN
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ATTACKS: 33
STAGE: A LARGE CRATER
AURA: INTENSE
HISTORY: BORN IN ENGLAND THE SON OF AN ANTIQUE DEALER, ROCK GREW UP IN CENTRAL AMERICA AFTER BEING SHIPWRECKED. HIS



DAD, AN ANTIQUES DEALER FROM PUTNEY, HAD ACTUALLY FOUND THE SOUL EDGE ON A TRIP TO THE FAR EAST, ON WHICH HE'D TAKEN THE MISSUS AND ROCK, JUST A NIPPER AT THE TIME. PA ROCK WAS CHUFFED TO PIECES WITH HIS DISCOVERY, BUT BEFORE HE COULD CARRY HIS NEW PRIZE SAFELY BACK TO BLIGHTY, HIS SHIP WAS ATTACKED BY THE PIRATE, CERVATES, WHO'D BEEN CONTRACTED BY VERCCI TO FIND THE SWORD. ROCK, LUCKILY ENOUGH, WAS WASHED UP ON SHORE NEARBY A TRIBE OF INDIANS. SHUNNED BY ALL BUT ONE OF THE TRIBE BECAUSE OF HIS WHITE SKIN AND LARGE SIZE, ROCK LEARNT TO LOOK AFTER HIMSELF. THEN ONE DAY, HE HEARD TALE OF THE SOULU EDGE, WHICH TRIGGERED OFF CHILDHOOD MEMORIES. ROCK DOESN'T WANT POWER, FAME OR REVENGE, HE JUST WANTS TO FIND SOUL EDGE TO DISCOVER HIS PAST. AHH.



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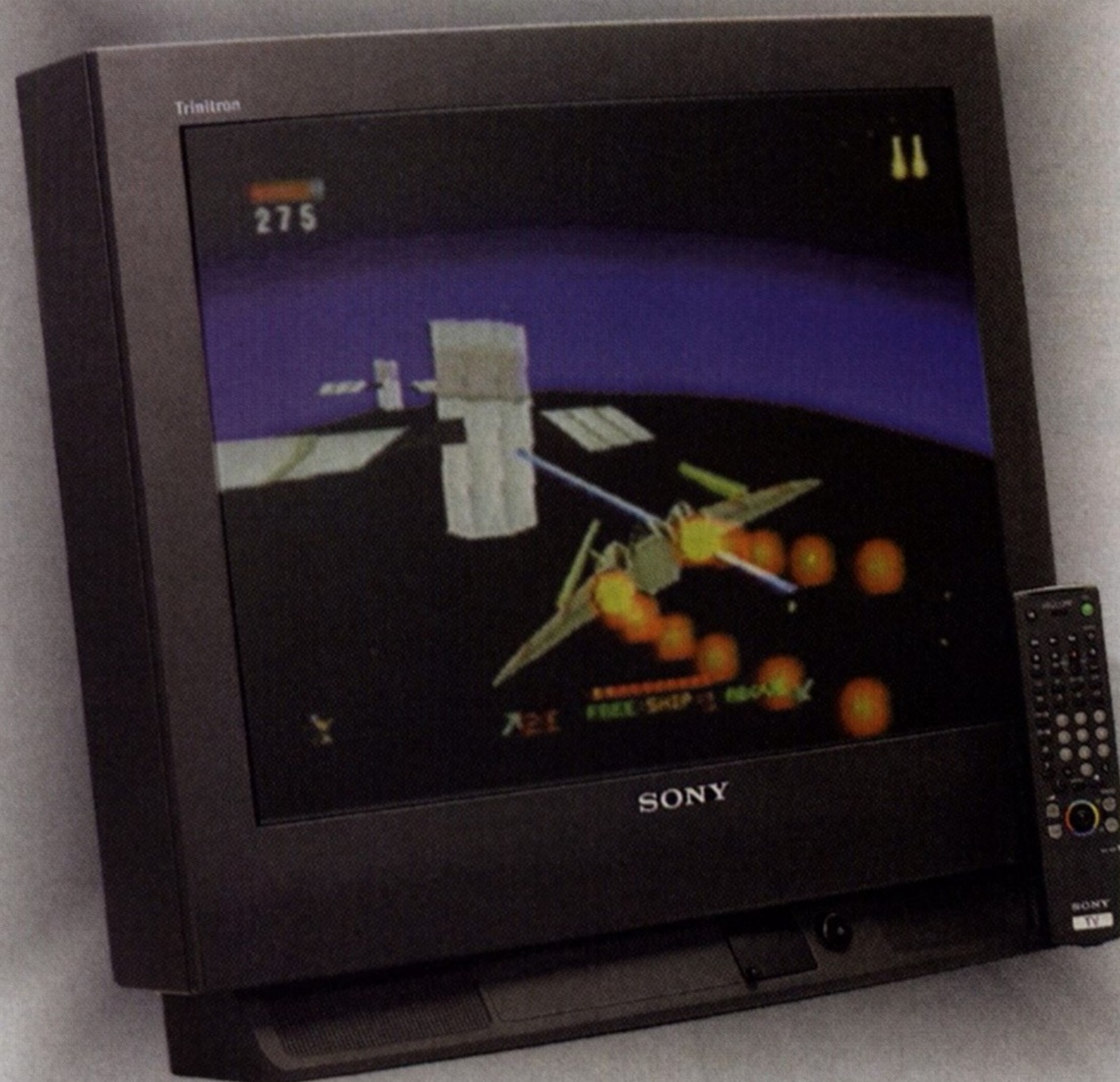
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Strip searched

I am not. The rubber gloves dusted in talcum powder and kept in the same style quick

release boxes as Kleenex thankfully stay clear of my bottom. But as I am of a nervous disposition, I discretely yank my belt two notches tighter. If they try to rush me, I'll have at least 15 seconds to scream like a girl before they find my Nikon.

It's not every day you get to visit a Konami R&D department and boy are these guys serious about their privacy. The head of the company, Mr Kusiki, has made it quite clear that if any sensitive information about its forthcoming products is made public, he will personally hack off the offender's head and turn it into an attractive plant pot. That explains the security measures and you can't blame him, but of course the big question on my mind, and that of the other journalists, was whether there was anything worth nicking in the first place?

It's not like THQ is it? Let's face it, if you broke into that firm's inner sanctum, all you'd get away with would be *Home Alone* and *Family Dog* on the Super NES; both set to join the millions of *ET* cartridges that Atari buried in a desert somewhere. Nope, Konami is most definitely big league, especially since the game I was there to see, *Project Overkill*, is destined to thrill PlayStation owners this September. It will be big, huge, ginormous. Mark my words, in a

couple of months, you would sell your granny to have this game.

VIEW TO A KILL

Project Overkill was first seen at the E3 show last year, albeit as a constantly looping demo. It's an isometric perspective shoot-'em-up that owes much of its brutality, and to some extent control system, to the hit arcade games *Smash TV* and *Total Carnage*. You control one of four characters (see boxout), using the D-pad for walking, and combinations of the four buttons for shooting in all forward



[ABOVE] Gush, burst eviscerate! Two lizard men feel the wrath of an automatic machine gun at full pelt. Note the blood spurting from its chest.

Blueprint

Publisher: Konami
Developer: KCEC
% Complete: 90%
Expected release date: September
Origin: USA
No of players: 1

OVERKILL

ER
CTION

WRITTEN BY DAMIAN BUTT



"You can actually see a bullet enter the chest and exit from the back and can die from many different angles."

**Developer X,
Konami Computer
Entertainment
Chicago.**

directions. Depending on the way you're facing for example, shooting to the left might be the [▲, ■ or X] button, or two pressed together. The way you get used to it is rolling your thumb around the buttons until the bullets go in the required direction. The game's chief developer explains why this system was chosen (although due to Konami policy, his name cannot be revealed – conspiracy theory, or what?).

"The control system comes from playing games and long term experience. In a top down or a three quarter perspective you are usually restricted to the direction you're facing. In a lot of cases with fast combat it creates a problem where you have to shoot and step back and

NOW YOU SEE ME...

AN ISOMETRIC PERSPECTIVE INEVITABLY MEANS THAT YOU ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO WALK IN FRONT OF SOLID WALLS, BUT THAT LEAVES YOU VULNERABLE TO ATTACK FROM AN UNSEEN ENEMY, AND *OVERKILL* RELIES ON BEING ABLE TO SPOT THE BAD GUYS AND TAKE THEM OUT WITH A MINIMUM OF FUSS. HOW HAVE THE DEVELOPERS GOT AROUND THE PROBLEM?

THE ANSWER LIES IN ONE OF THE PLAYSTATION'S BUILT-IN TRICKS, OBJECT TRANSPARENCY. WHEN YOUR CHARACTER WALKS IN FRONT OF A WALL, IT IMMEDIATELY BECOMES SEE-THROUGH; LEAVING A FAINT OUTLINE OF THE WALL. IT'S A SYSTEM THAT WORKS WELL, AND IT CERTAINLY POSES A FEW PROBLEMS FOR THE SEGA SATURN CONVERSION, WHICH OF COURSE DOES NOT HAVE THIS FEATURE.



then shoot again, instead of strafing from side to side and spraying the area with bullets. That opens up a lot of gameplay and gives you some freedom. The number of frames of animation is immense, because you've got to draw the characters when they are shooting and not shooting (torsos lit up by the muzzle flash), whether they are running or turning left and right while firing. It becomes a nightmare!"

It also takes a lot of getting used to, but once you've got the hang of it, the control system's instinctive, and you can take out guards with surgical precision rather than wasting bullets in a kill-crazy rampage. Restraint is the order of the day.

What about that viewpoint though, surely *Doom* and *Alien Trilogy* have shown the way a shoot-'em-up should be played?

"We're happy with the view because the first person look has been used excessively. In *Overkill* you can actually see a bullet enter the chest and exit from the back, and you can die from many different angles. When you have an opportunity to paint a world with blood and bodies it's nice to see it

"A gush-fest of epic proportions, with blood, entrails, brain matter and bits of skull splattered all over the shop!"



[ABOVE] A Vicerian guard is obliterated by a single laser blast. Cool.



[ABOVE] Here you can see the attention to detail that KCEC have put into wholesale slaughter. Blood smeared on walls, stacks of bodies. Great game!



[ABOVE] Trapped in a pit underneath a false floor you mindlessly blast everything in sight. You always know where you are in *Project Overkill* thanks to the map, object viewer and ammo levels.



[ABOVE] Each of the four blokes lying dead here bought the farm in different ways, hence their body shapes.



[ABOVE] Eat grenade Vicerian scum! As chaos ensues, note the eyeball to the left. Use it to pass retina scan doors.

"A big motivation in this game is revenge... it's always nice to sneak back up on a guy and [makes a choking noise] stab him in the face!"
Developer X,
Konami Computer Entertainment Chicago

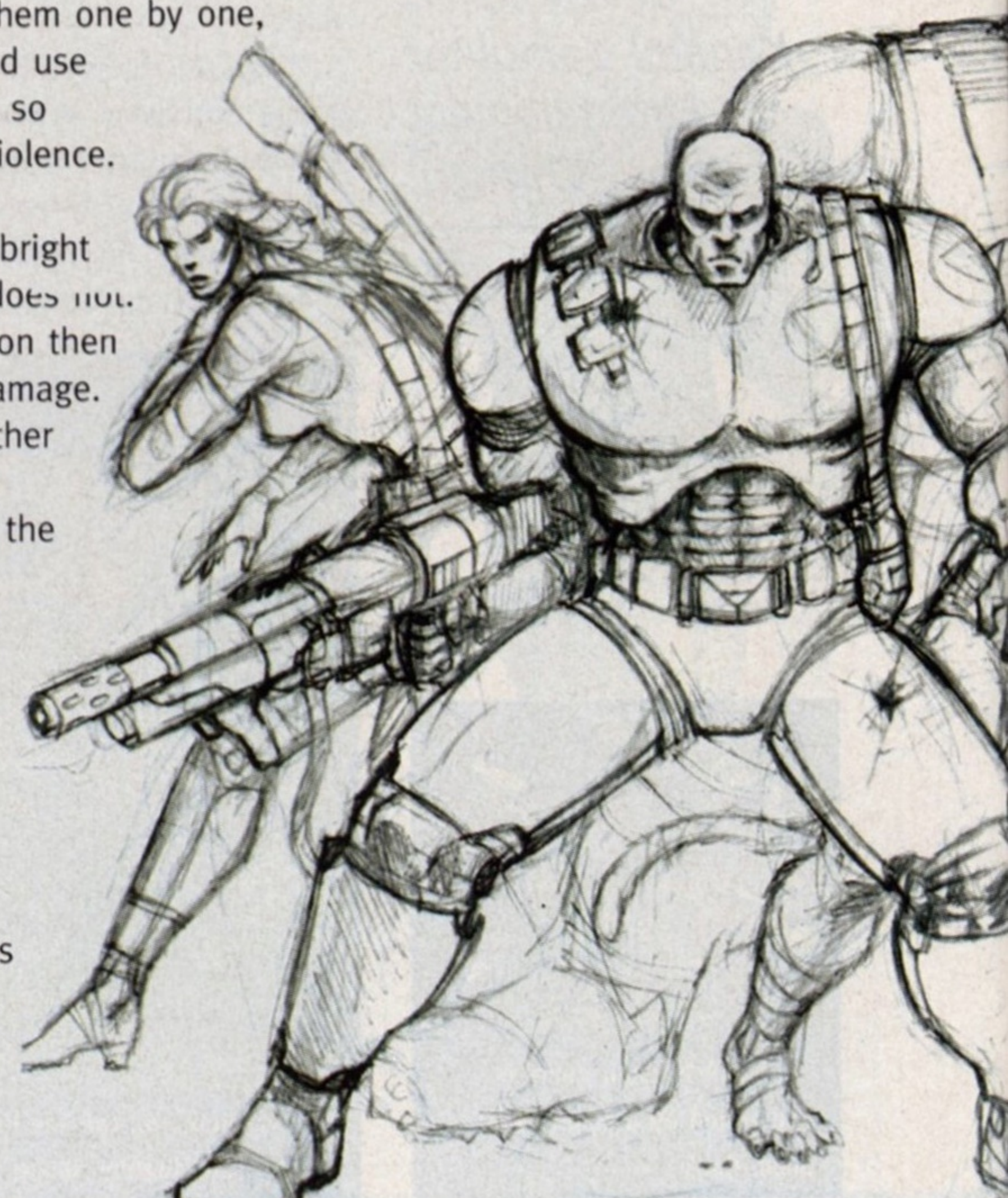


looked at other games in that genre to try and learn from what they'd done and how we could improve on them. We looked at games like *Ultima VIII* and saw the problems, like the walls blocking the view. That was our inspiration." What about *Loaded* from Gremlin?

"*Loaded* came much later in development. It caused us concern when the magazines over here started talking about this violent game, but when we looked at it we realised it was completely different. *Overkill* has 51 different levels and you can tackle them one by one, or take a different route and use different characters. There's so much more variation and violence. In *Loaded*, when you shot something it turned into a bright red smear. In our game it does not. If you have a precise weapon then you're looking at precise damage. A rocket launcher on the other hand will turn someone to sludge. And of course with the artificial intelligence we developed, the enemies all have different personalities."

Jon Sloan, a key member of Konami's UK team, interjects at this point.

"Emotionally, our game is very different from *Loaded*. With *Overkill* you start off just fighting low level grunts, and then you get to the hydra plant



from this perspective and get an idea of the kind of carnage you've created. It's a great perspective to have for a violent game."

As you can no doubt tell from the many screenshots littered throughout this Workstation, *Project Overkill* is most definitely a fab looking game. The three quarter view affords some splendid detail on the walls of each complex (there are 51 missions – all entirely different looking and populated by a variety of opponents), and the transparent wall effect is perfectly implemented to allow you to not get lost behind scenery. Every level is detailed beyond belief, with computer consoles and laboratory paraphernalia crammed into every corner, and all of it can be damaged by fire or explosions; leaving a satisfying scorch mark or bared innards.

BODY OF EVIDENCE

Developer KCEC has also made the right step of leaving all the bodies where they fall, and this, together with the damage, means you can easily gauge where you have and haven't been. There are plenty of clever ideas in the game, but the question that needed to be asked was where did the idea for the game come from, and was it influenced by existing games?

"We started out with basic elements, like the fact that we wanted a fast action shooting game accompanied by a three quarter view, varied characters and many missions, and then we

SOFTOGRAPHY

KCEC

Bottom of the 9th (PSX) US only.
Project Overkill (PSX)

SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

[PROJECT OVERKILL – KONAMI]



[CRUSADER – ELECTRONIC ARTS]



MEAN TEAM

PROJECT OVERKILL IS A BIG GAME, NO IN FACT IT'S HUGE. FORTUNATELY, YOU CAN SPREAD YOUR RESOURCES AMONGST FOUR CHARACTERS AND USE THEM ONE AT A TIME TO PROGRESS. ONE OF THEM IS PROFICIENT AT STEALTH MISSIONS FOR EXAMPLE, AND CAN QUITE HAPPILY STAB SOMEONE TO DEATH WITHOUT BEING DETECTED. IN HIS CASE, YOU SHOULD SEND HIM TO A LEVEL



AGENT: Althea Timmeron

RACE: Transhuman

CLASS: Demolitions

Althea is a terrorist, a mercenary for hire who sells her skills to the highest bidder. She is good with explosives, likes to party, and prefers tactical play to outright thuggery. Althea is well equipped in planetary take-over methods and is therefore perfect for the missions in *Overkill*. There is strong evidence in her psychological makeup that suggests she likes to watch things burn.



AGENT: Jendryk Espion

RACE: Hykanian

CLASS: Assassin

"Hey, did you hear something?" "No, it must be your imagination!" Jendryk is a master of the darkness and an expert with every silent killing weapon known to man. Whereas Kreeg leaps in guns blazing, Jendryk prefers to take out opponents from behind using his bowie knife and cutting them to pieces with his silenced machine gun. You'll never hear Jendryk approach, but you can see where he's been.



AGENT: Lanslow Kreeg

RACE: Earthling

CLASS: Armsman

Kreeg (he hates being called Lanslow) is a highly capable fighter who served in the Hive War and gained a reputation as a Class A nutter. Well versed in all kinds of weaponry, Kreeg is fast, deadly and a good all-rounder. Listen to that sick sound when he guts yet another sleepy security guard! Kreeg is also prone to ingesting vast quantities of drugs to heighten his aggressiveness. Bottom line, don't spill his pint.



AGENT: Quogg S'Sethinon

RACE: Saurian

CLASS: Infantry combat

Armed with a ridiculously large chain gun, Quogg is a genetic hybrid bred for combat, but short on brain cells. Ask him and a kangaroo a maths question and Skipper wins every time. Fortunately for the *Overkill* team, Quogg is very strong (although a little slow), brutal and can keep going for hours. Quogg's gun is extremely powerful but he prefers to club his opponents to death with the blunt end.

and come up against these things (Frog creatures apparently – Ed). You walk into the caves and then all of a sudden you hear this "RAAAAAAAAAARRR!" – you think, what's going on? By the time you get to that level of course your energy is down and you're low on ammo, so you have to ask yourself, "am I gonna get through this?" You feel a lot more intensity with this game, and you can see it on the faces of journalists when they play it for the first time. *Overkill* is a real departure from the old style Konami games, it's got a distinctly adult feel."

BLOOD, OH MOTHER, BLOOD!

But of course I haven't even mentioned the game's raison d'être yet. The one thing that makes it stand out from all the other shoot-'em-ups on the PlayStation. *Project Overkill* is a gush-fest of epic proportions, with blood, entrails, brain matter and bits of skull splattered all over the shop when you take out the enemy. In other words, they've left the blood in for the

UK version.

But it's the elegance, the attention to detail and the enthusiasm with which the claret is spilled that makes *Overkill* a joy to play. Shoot a guard with your mini gun and his body ruptures as the bullets tear through; culminating in multiple exit wounds that are clearly visible. Switch your attention to that dude trying to creep up on you and BLAM! His head is blown open – JFK style! A gut shot means he falls to his knees clutching his stomach, and a random spray can send your opponents spinning in all directions, each buying the farm in different ways. Unlike *Doom*, where a shot decks a monster instantly and a pile of bodies are identical, you can actually see how the corpses in *Overkill* met their maker, and in many cases, the blood is still dripping down the walls behind them. You even leave bloody footprints



[ABOVE] Only seconds ago this was a busy control room, then Kreeg arrived with his big gun. Oh the humanity.



[ABOVE] BA-DAM! – Jendryk hits an unsuspecting guard right in the face and blood sprays all over the place. Lovely.

"BLAM! His head is blown open – JFK style!"



[ABOVE] This development grab shows the path of a homing mine as it arcs behind the player and destroys a robot.

behind if you walk through a fresh carcass. God is in the details.

There are plenty of weapons on offer too. Each character has his/her own speciality, and there are plenty more to be found all over the levels, particularly in the numerous secret rooms. Rocket launchers, homing missiles, pistols, lasers... in fact, why don't we hear it from the horse's mouth?

"Kreeg has this automatic turret he can drop, and at first you wonder about its usefulness because you're always shooting yourself in the back. However once you acquire the knowledge it becomes a very deadly tool and good for setting traps. Some of the other weapons include a simple mine which you can detonate by pressing a button, and with the homers you find yourself laughing with a kind of sick humour as a bomb flies around the back of a computer console and hits some guy full in the face turning him into goo!"

Hmm.

OFF TO THE CRUSADES

Project Overkill's biggest potential rival, apart from *Re-Loaded*, is Electronic Arts' PC conversion, *Crusader*, a game which is markedly similar. *Overkill's* control system is undoubtedly better, but what the EA game has in spades is strategy elements and an involving plot. Does *Overkill* make similar demands of your brain-power to counter this, or is it just mindless blood-letting?

"As far as the strategy goes, there are keycards and hidden areas to locate as



[ABOVE] The player steps in the carcass of a fresh victim. At the moment, if this happens, you will leave bloody footprints when you walk away. Hopefully this feature will stay in the UK version.

well as specific mission objectives."

The developers are quick to point out the long term aspects of the game.

"A lot of the missions aren't that involving beyond destroying equipment, poisoning the water supply, killing a specific enemy, or a number of enemies such as prison guards. But it is the variety and intelligence of the enemies that will keep players engrossed. A big motivation in this game is revenge. If a Vicerian sentry has shot you, it's always nice to sneak back up on that guy and [makes a choking noise] stab him in the face!"

Project Overkill certainly has the edge when it comes to close-up combat, but surely a multi-player mode would seal *Crusader's* fate once and for all? Unfortunately, that is not an option...

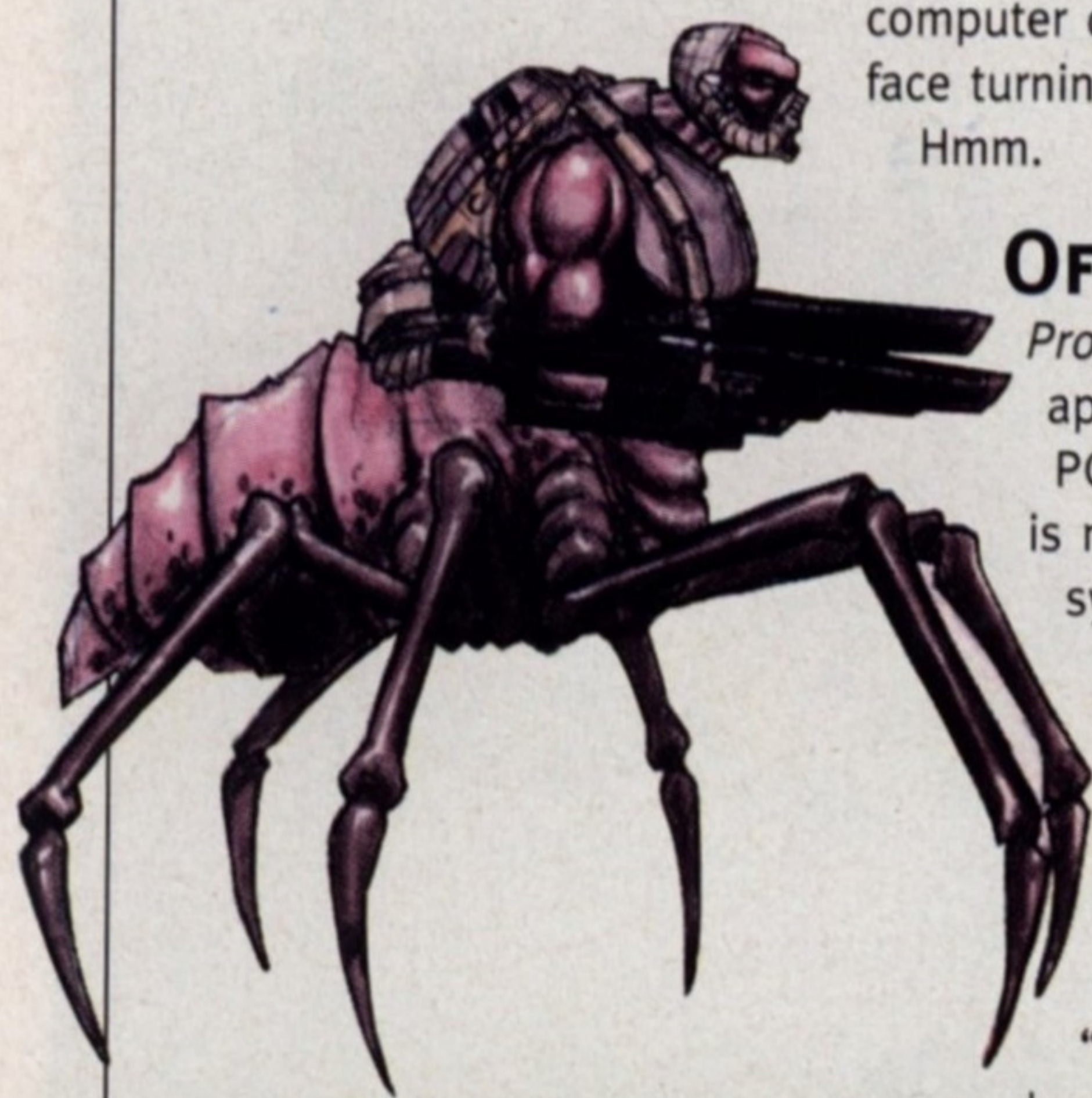
"It's mainly because of the memory requirements. If we had to put another character on the screen, we'd have to drop most of the enemies or some of the backgrounds. Already, with some of the bigger bosses, we have to be careful of slow-down, and although there isn't any in the game, we have to watch the size and number of these guys on-screen at once."

Shame that.

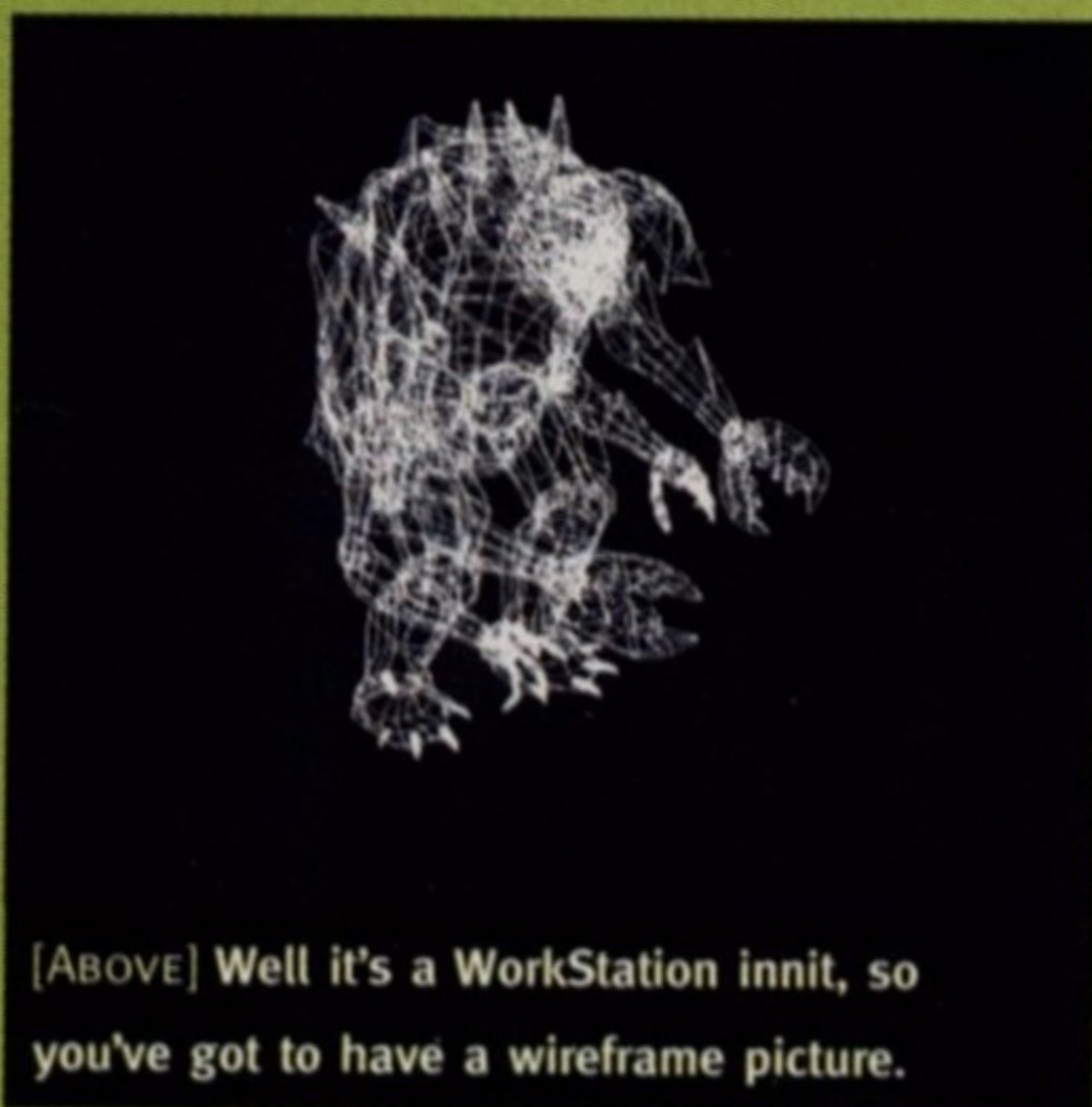
Project Overkill is set for a release in September and *Crusader* is scheduled for later in the year, which certainly gives Konami the edge. But in all honesty it has nothing to fear since it is unquestionably the hottest shoot-'em-up on the PSX. Konami, once giants on the Nintendo Super NES, look poised to conquer the PlayStation with the same vigour, and after *International Track & Field* and *Project Overkill*, there are conversions of *Crypt Killer*, *Road Rage*, *Lethal Enforcers* and *Contra* to look forward to. There's a new cock in the roost!



[ABOVE] You can plan your own route through each level using this neat 3-D map.



You below the whistle on the blag you slag!



[ABOVE] Well it's a WorkStation innit, so you've got to have a wireframe picture.



[ABOVE] This is a creature called a slag in all its rendered glory. Watch those claws!



[ABOVE] As well as piles of bodies all over the place, you can clearly see the damaged computer consoles hit by stray bullets.

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SONY'S ATTEMPT AT A MASCOT SUPERHERO IS DUE TO BURST ONTO THE SCENE THIS SEPTEMBER. PLAYSTATION'S ANSWER TO SONIC AND MARIO? PLAY GIVES 3-D EVANGELIST AND NAUGHTY DOG BOSS JASON RUBIN A PLATFORM.

CRASH BANDICOOT

One thing that

Blueprint

Publisher: Sony CE
Developer: Naughty Dog
% Complete: 75%
Expected Release Date: September '96
Origin: USA
No of Players: One

the PlayStation has certainly been missing is a good next generation platform-style character – classics such as *Donkey Kong Country* and *Earthworm Jim* are non-existent. What there is hasn't managed to capture 3-D imaginatively. Roll on *Crash Bandicoot*. Developed by Naughty Dog, a development team from the US, Sony's new character game promises to address this and set new standards along the way, according to Jason Rubin.

"With *Crash Bandicoot*, we wanted to create a product with a strong main character, and a game that would push the technological curve in its genre," comments Jason.

"Gameplay in character based games hasn't come that far since 1994, and they are generally confined to the plane of the screen. Back when we started *Crash* we knew that the soon to be released 32-bit systems could handle a good deal more graphically, so we set out to bring the character based action game into the 3-D age."

ALL CRASHED OUT

Crash Bandicoot, the character, is concerned with saving his girlfriend from the Evil Dr Neo Cortex who has her captive and is about to subject her to some life-threatening tests. Can Crash save her?

"We created Crash because of our love of the classics: Mario and Sonic. He was designed by Naughty Dog, Universal Interactive Studios, and a professional Hollywood cartoon design team that had previously worked on *An American Tale*. Crash really had no direct inspirations. We loved the Warner characters, and tried to design Crash with a Warner-like flair. But at the same time, Crash is more 'hip' than those characters, and more Nineties," explains Jason.

Crash is a classic 2-D action game brought into the 3rd dimension. It took six months for the team to come up with a formula that allowed the player to not only move in true 3-D, but also gave the player constant challenges and pitfalls, as classics such as *Earthworm Jim*

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

and *Donkey Kong Country* did.

"*Crash's* levels move in all directions. Some levels go into the screen, some go to the left or right, in some the player has to go up or down, and some even come out of the screen towards the player. With 3-D, different levels are no longer restricted to graphical changes and different enemies. The 'direction' of gameplay actually alters with the challenge as well."

There are over 30 levels in the game, six boss characters, bonus rounds, secret levels, and two ways to win the game. Players can either attempt to simply go through all of the levels and get to the end, or if they're more sophisticated, attempt to collect and do everything, in which case they're rewarded with additional elements and endings.

ROB DOGS

"Each level contains obstacles in the form of environmental hazards and enemy creatures. Everything is done in 3-D. Crash can run, climb, jump, ride animals and use a tornado-like spin attack. In addition, the environment also gives him some interesting abilities. *Crash's* levels are probably the most graphically rich 3-D environments ever created for a real-time application. In other words, there are organic shapes, plants, boulders, bumpy paths, shadows, lighting effects, trees, ruined statues and other elements that haven't been seen in



[ABOVE] One of the levels where you can travel in and out of the screen as well as around it.



[ABOVE] Reflections add a realistic touch to the detail, further immersing the player.

SOFTOGRAPHY

NAUGHTY DOG:

- 1986 *Ski Krazed* (Apple II)
- 1987 *Dream Zone* (Apple IIGS, Amiga, Atari ST, PC)
- 1989 *Keef the Thief* (Apple IIGS, Amiga, PC)
- 1991 *Rings of Power* (Mega Drive)
- 1994 *Way of the Warrior* (3DO)



[ABOVE] Several requirements were laid down before the inception of *Crash Bandicoot* to ensure that Naughty Dog's mammoth effort would be a superlative standard-setting game.

[ABOVE RIGHT] Exceptionally highly detailed texture-maps give *Crash* a unique look. Crash himself is beautifully rendered, with a smooth mesh skin over his 'joints'.



[ABOVE] 600Mb of data, with NO audio tracks will make *Crash Bandicoot* the biggest single disc game to date.

NAUGHTY DOGS

OWNERS:

ANDY GAVIN AND JASON RUBIN

PROGRAMMING:

ANDY GAVIN, DAVE BAGGETT, DAN KOLLMORGEN

ART:

JASON RUBIN, BOB RAFFI, TAYLOR KUROSAKI, CHARLOTTE FRANCIS

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

JUSTIN MONAST

COOT

"With *Crash Bandicoot* we wanted to create a strong main character and a game that would push the technological curve..."

Jason Rubin,
Naughty Dog



games yet. Crash also uses a proprietary polygon skin mesh technology that we have developed. This keeps his joints smooth like a Warner cartoon as opposed to the *Tekken* joint popping or *Mario 64*'s z-buffered interlocking sausage look. We outlined ten or so goals we wanted to shoot for, graphically and technically. No polygon pop-up, no blocky texture-maps from zooms, no sorting errors – even without a z-buffer, no clipping errors where the camera goes through walls, rich worlds as opposed to boxy worlds etc. For gameplay, we strove to achieve the greatness of the classics – certainly not an easy task but I think we've achieved it," concluded Jason. Here's looking to this autumn, when PLAY will be testing out the theory will all its usual ferocity.



MASCOT MADNESS

FIVE SHORT YEARS AGO, SONIC THE HEDGEHOG MADE HIS DEBUT ON THE SEGA MEGA DRIVE. AS FAR AS NINTENDO'S MOUSTACHIOED PLUMBER'S CONCERNED, HE'S BEEN AROUND THE CIRCUIT FOR OVER 16 YEARS NOW IN VARIOUS GUISES. SO CAN *CRASH BANDICOOT* PUT THE PLAYSTATION ON THE MAP?

WHERE MASCOTS ARE CONCERNED, WITHOUT A DOUBT THE TEAMS BEHIND SONIC AND MARIO HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE BEHIND THEM. WHAT MADE THESE GAMES CLASSICS, APART FROM THE WELL DEFINED CHARACTERS, WAS THE SUPERLATIVE LEVELS OF GAMEPLAY THAT THESE GAMES OFFERED IN RESPECT OF BONUSES, HIDDEN LEVELS, AND OF COURSE, PRECISION CONTROL.

SO FAR MOST GAMES ON THE PLAYSTATION HAVE MADE VALIANT ATTEMPTS AT PRODUCING 'CLASSIC' GAMES, BUT NONE HAVE PARTICULARLY SHONE OUT.

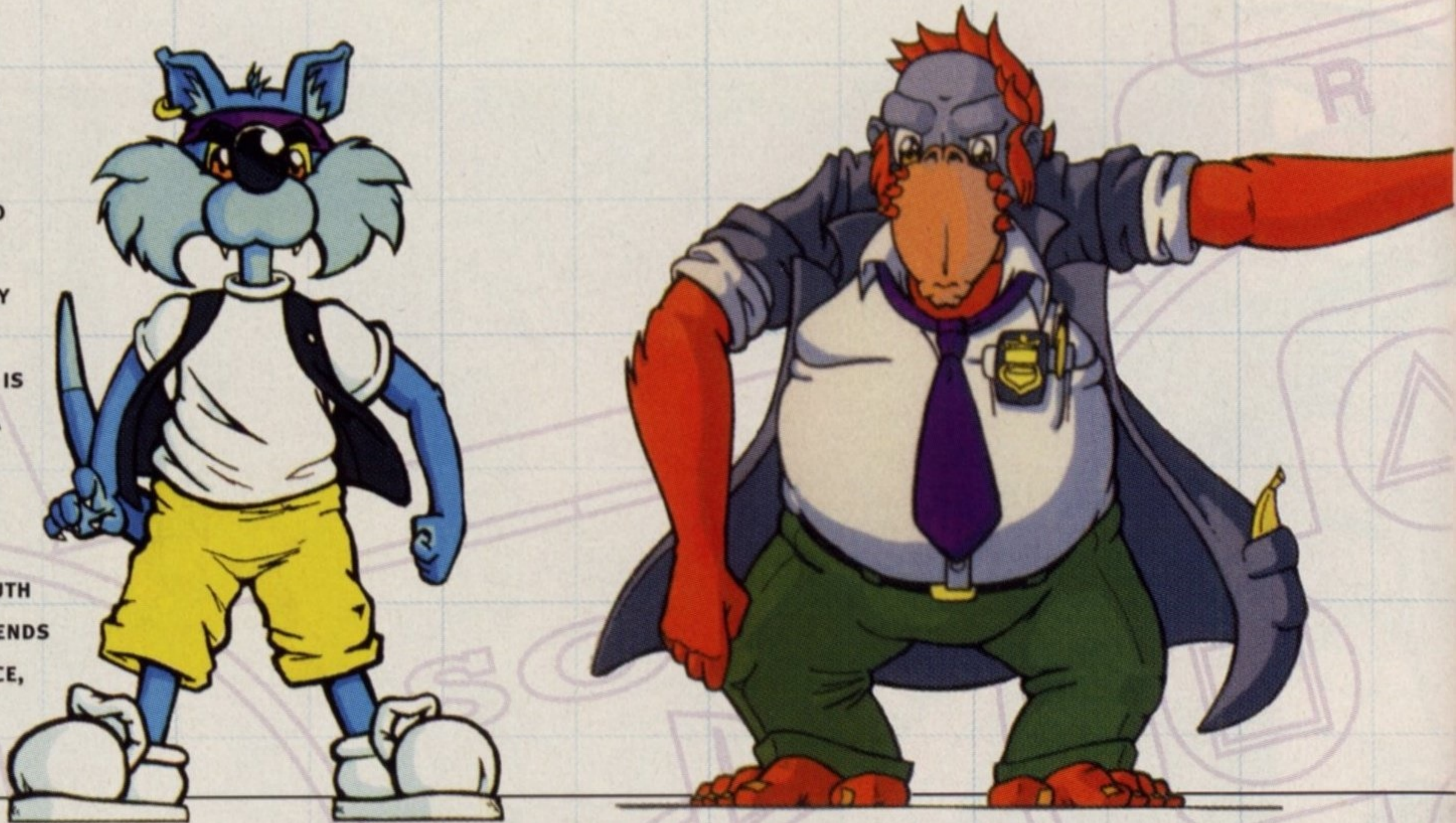
APART FROM THE RIDICULOUS NAME (LET'S FACE IT, "CRASH BANDICOOT" HARDLY ROLLS OFF THE TONGUE, PERHAPS IT COULD BE SHORTENED TO "CRASH OOT" [BEST SAID IN A GEORDIE ACCENT]) *CB* SOUNDS VERY IMPRESSIVE. WITH THE GAME PRACTICALLY COMPLETE NOW, *CRASH* IS GOING TO GO THROUGH SEVERAL MONTHS OF TESTING TO GET THE GAMEPLAY, DIFFICULTY CURVE AND LEVELS INTO A PLAYABLE FORM. WITH THE AMOUNT OF SUPPORT SONY ARE GIVING THIS GAME, AND THE VERY IMPRESSIVE TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS, *CB* HAS ALL THE HALLMARKS THAT COULD INDEED MAKE IT INTO THE CLASSIC CHARACTER GAME THAT THE PLAYSTATION NEEDS. LET'S JUST HOPE THAT NAUGHTY DOG CAN COME UP WITH THE GOODS.



CREATURES BEHAVING BADLY

FIRO IS AN ORANG-UTAN COP IN HIS MID-FORTIES, WHO HAS SEEN JUST A LITTLE TOO MUCH OF THE WORST SIDE OF THE BIG CITY. ALTHOUGH HE HAS RESPECT FOR THE LAW, HIS MAIN LOVE IS GUNS. HE'S THE KIND OF COP WHO GETS THE JOB DONE IN A WAY THAT USUALLY LANDS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN BIG TROUBLE. HE REALLY HATES THE KIND OF SCUM THAT HIS TYPE OF WORK BRINGS HIM INTO CONTACT WITH AND WHEN HE IS FORCED TO WORK WITH KLAWD, HE IS LESS THAN HAPPY. YOU SHOULD ONLY CALL HIM A FAT APE IF YOU CAN OUTFRAN HIM, WHICH ISN'T DIFFICULT DUE TO HIS JUNK FOOD DIET. HEAVEN FOR FIRO IS A GUN SHOP LIQUIDATION SALE WITH FREE FOOD AND BEER!

KLAWD IS A YOUNG STREET-WISE ALLEY CAT. HE'S NO COWARD, BUT LIVING IN NEW YAK'S DEPRIVED AREAS HAS TAUGHT HIM THE BEST WAY OUT OF TROUBLE IS A FAST MOUTH AND EVEN FASTER LEGS. HE'S NO STRANGER TO THE LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT AS HE TENDS TO EARN A LIVING BY VARIOUS CRAFTY METHODS. ONE OF THESE IS HIS DELIVERY SERVICE, 'SMALL PACKAGES TAKEN ANYWHERE, NO QUESTIONS ASKED.' HIS MAJOR PASTIME IS SHOOTING CANS IN THE ALLEYS WITH HIS TRUSTY CATAPULT.



FIRO & KLAWD

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE TAKE TIME, AND ARE MOST DEFINITELY WORTH THE WAIT. THAT'S WHAT THE BOYS AT INTERACTIVE STUDIOS BELIEVE. ONE OF THE FIRST EVER TEAMS TO GET HOLD OF A PLAYSTATION DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IT'S TAKEN THEM 18 MONTHS FOR THEIR NEW GAME TO EMERGE – FIRO & KLAWD.



“At Interactive

Studios, we all want to create original, innovative and fun games,” remarks Philip Oliver.

Philip, together with his brother Andrew, are the Oliver twins. They started in the games industry way back in 1981, and were the team behind the immensely successful *Dizzy* series, which was centred around the exploits of a baseball hat-wearing egg! But since the relatively squeaky clean days of the Spectrum and Commodore 64, interactive entertainment has come a long way, and so have expectations. “We wanted our latest game to be set within a very ‘gritty’, down-to-earth, environment which showed realistic graphics as opposed to clean, shiny and often cute games, and this is where our inspiration for the New York slums style came from.” And so *Firo & Klawd* was born.

“The fundamental concept was to create an action packed visually stunning game. The 3-D isometric levels were the main solution and the main concept. However, we wanted to occasionally break this for variety and as a result we have inserted several first person perspective shooting games,” continues Philip, enthusing about his cartoon creation. “They’ve been thrown together to solve a counterfeiting

racket after Klawd stole from the mob and Firo got caught up in the revenge. Unfortunately, the mob are a very organised bunch and have put up reward posters offering so much money that anyone with a gun is out to kill Firo and Klawd, and in the big city just about everyone has a gun, so it’s a pretty dangerous place if you’re on a reward poster!”

YIPPEE KAY APE...

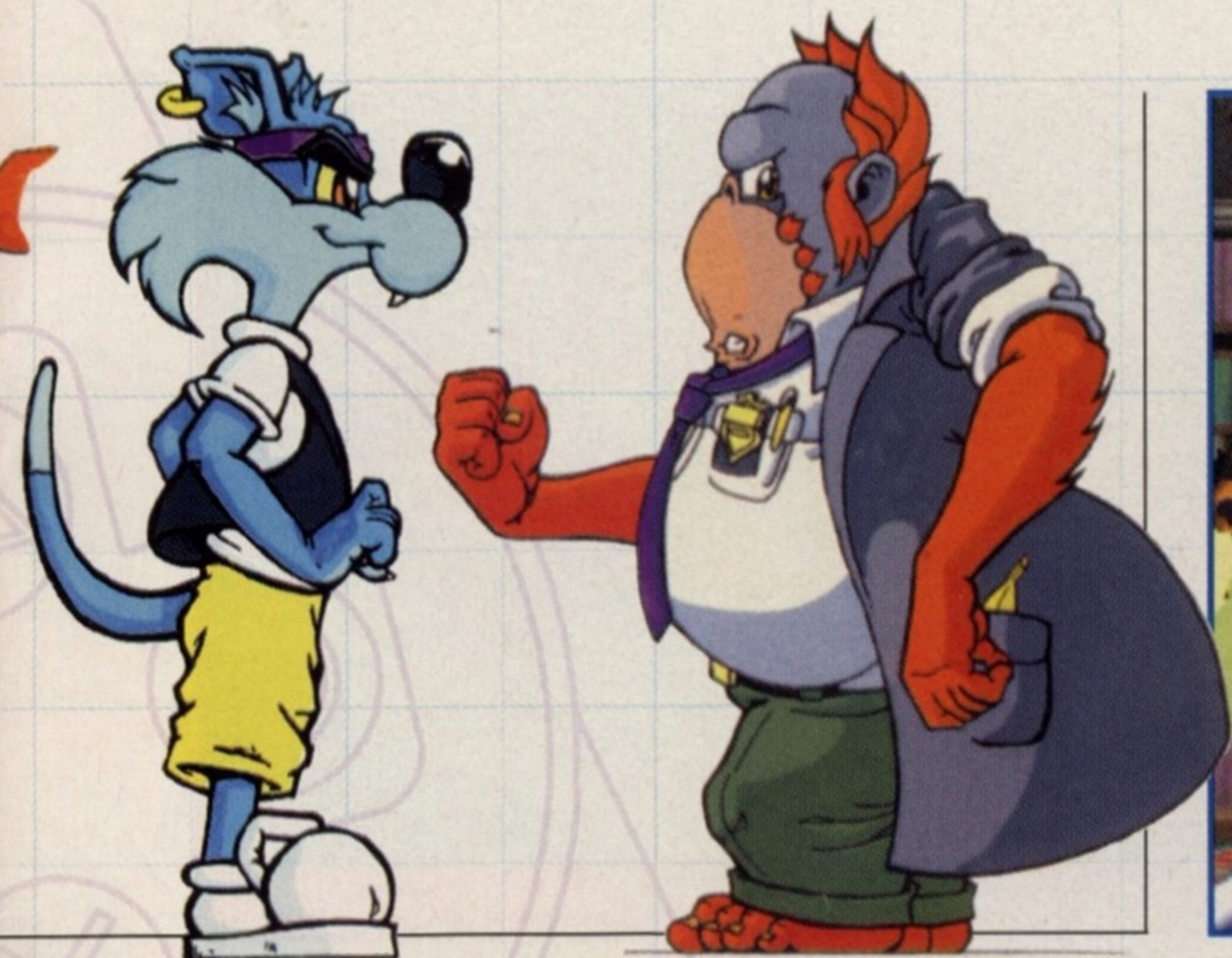
So what d’ya have to do? “The players must find who is responsible for this counterfeiting crime



[ABOVE] The armoury can be a dangerous place for two unwitting and unwilling crime fighters.

Blueprint

Publisher: BMGie
Developer: Interactive Studios
% Complete: 90%
Expected Release Date: September '96
Origin: UK
No of Players: 1-2



AWD

"We wanted the in-game action to give the players a real adrenaline rush, which it does!"

Philip Oliver,
Interactive Studios



[ABOVE] Klawd finds himself surrounded. Like a good partner, Firo keeps his distance and calls for doughnuts.

and make arrests. Unfortunately, as players will find, the arrests never seem to go according to plan – but why this happens the players will have to fathom for themselves, as there are multiple endings." But what kind of depth is there? "Throughout the game, there are many different routes that can be taken and it is always worth players trying doorways and different routes since they can quite often lead to rewards and surprises. We have tried to make the game realistic but 'larger than life', in the same way Hollywood movies do – lots of over-the-top action. We wanted the in-game activity to give the players a real adrenaline rush, which it does!," grins Philip. "When enemies are shot, they do fade off which is a bit unrealistic, but this was done because there are so many of them that the screen becomes too cluttered. Often there are eight or more



[ABOVE] Firo and Klawd battle it out against a baseball bat-wielding terrorist. Notice Klawd's catapult.



[ABOVE] Firo ponders what to have for lunch whilst a couple of spacemen decide to blow up the chemical plant.



[ABOVE] Ooops! Looks like Firo just got wasted by the villains. At this point Klawd lights a cigarette...

MOTLEY CREW

ON YOUR TRAVELS, YOU'LL ENCOUNTER ALL MANNER OF VARIOUS DIFFERENT CHARACTERS IN THE GAME. THESE RANGE FROM THE ANNOYING TO THE OVERWHELMING. HERE'S A ROLL CALL OF SOME OF THE MORE NOTEWORTHY MISCREANTS THAT WILL DO THEIR UTMOST TO HAMPER YOU ON YOUR MISSION...



[BEAVER]



[BOREMAN]



[Boss]



[BRUCE]

IT'S A WILD WORLD

FIRO & KLAWD IS SET OVER 18 HUGE AND IMMENSELY DETAILED LEVELS. EACH WORLD TAKES YOU THROUGH A DIFFERENT PART OF THE GRITTY SLUMS THAT ARE NEW YAK. THE VARIETY IN SCENERY IS BREATH-TAKING; COVERING A WHOLE SPECTRUM OF GRAPHICAL STYLES AND PALETTES, TO CREATE JUST THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE. HERE ARE SOME OF THE LUSH LANDSCAPES YOU'LL HAVE TO TRAVERSE ON YOUR JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE.



[ABOVE] This is part of the gritty backstreet slum area that Klawd grew up in.



[ABOVE] These worlds, despite looking small, are huge and highly detailed.

SOFTOGRAPHY

INTERACTIVE STUDIOS:

Sundry Dizzy games
(Various Formats)
Creature Shock
(PlayStation & Saturn)
Judge Dredd
(Game Boy & Game Gear)
Syndicate
(Sega CD & Mega-CD)
Marko's Magic Football
(Sega CD & Mega-CD)
Theme Park
(Sega CD & Mega-CD FMV)
PLUS PRESENTATION GRAPHICS ON:
Wolverine
(Super NES)
Micro Machines 2
(Mega Drive)



full size enemies shooting at you!" I suppose you can't have everything in life. Or video games for that matter...

...MONKEY FUNSTER

In the New Yak slums you must meet a lot of nefarious characters. "Most characters fall into the category of general gangster types, and although there are lots of different ones, they are repeated, so there are lots to blow away. However, there are certain key characters, which if shot will change the direction of the game."

One of the biggest flaws of a lot of adventure games is that despite promises of 'adventure', the storyline is still a little too linear. What about *F&K*? "*Firo & Klawd's* story flow chart is very complex, allowing the players many different options, and never allowing them to come to a dead end. This does mean there are several ways to achieve the same goal. But what's important is that there's more than one goal (we're not saying how many!). Therefore, we've made the game

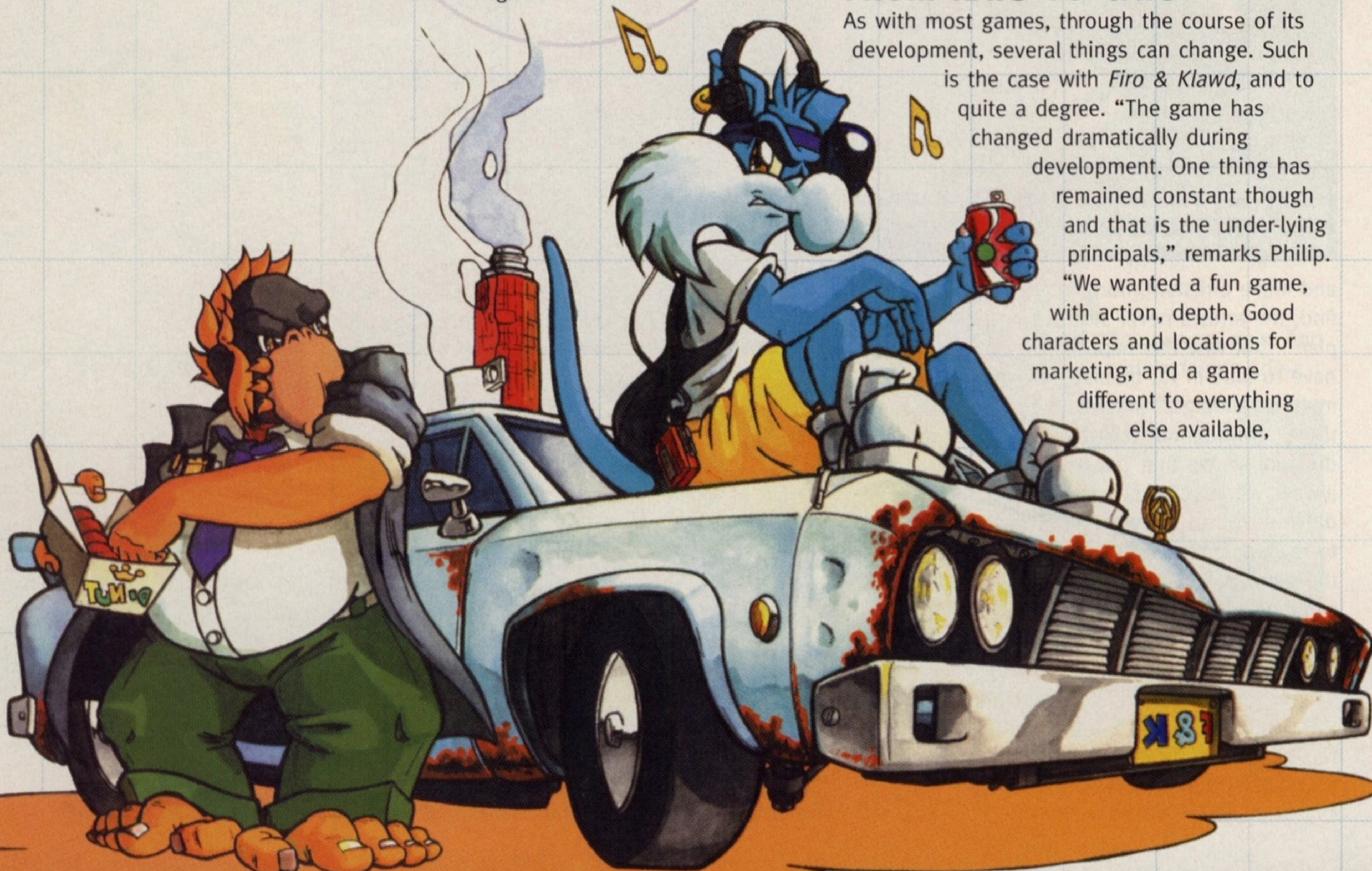


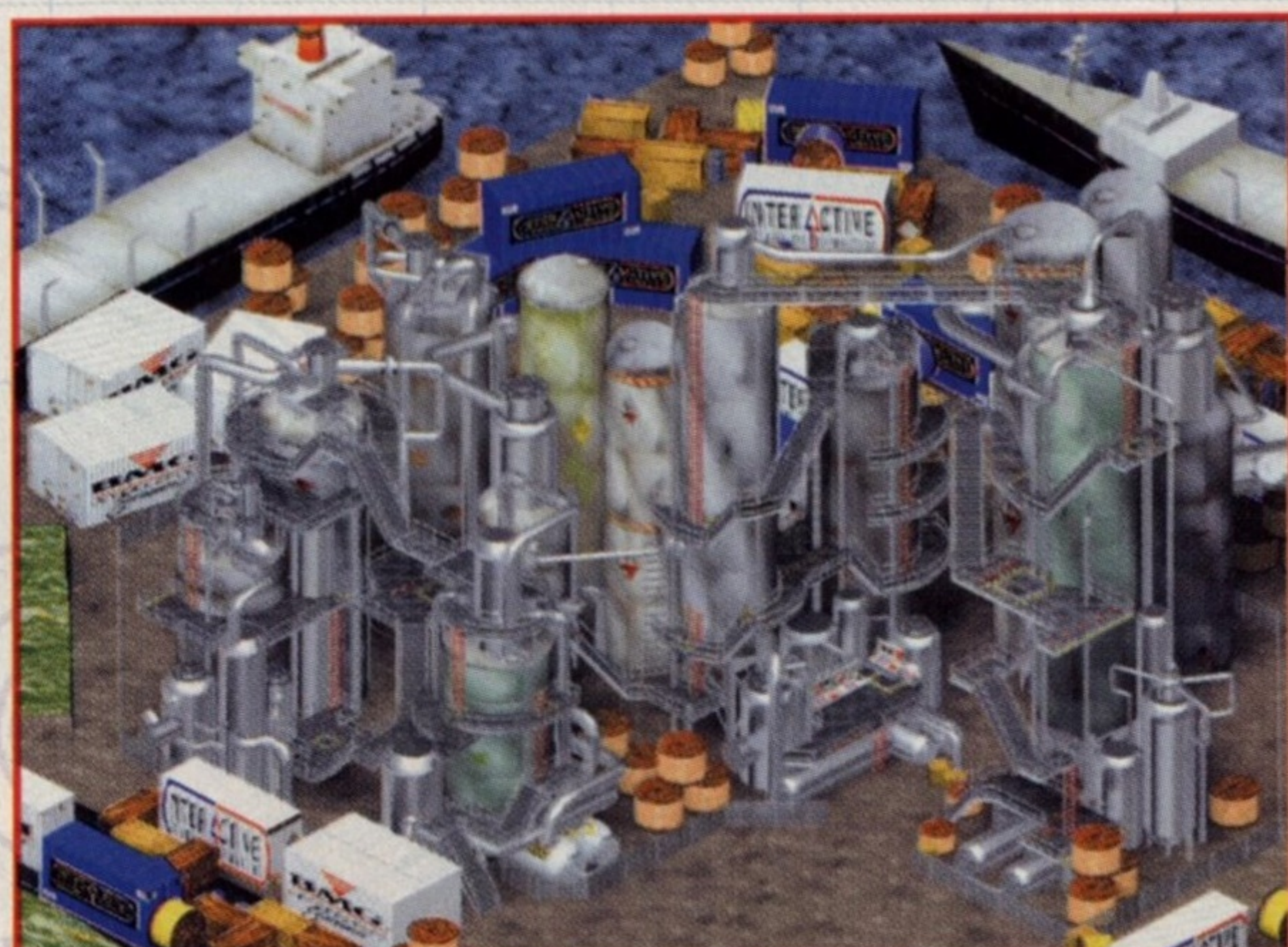
[ABOVE] The park might look innocent enough, but could harbour all manner of nastiness. Watch out Klawd!

possible to beat by most people, but once beaten there is still so much more to see! Most routes through the story line only use half the number of locations and sub-games available," says Philip reassuringly.

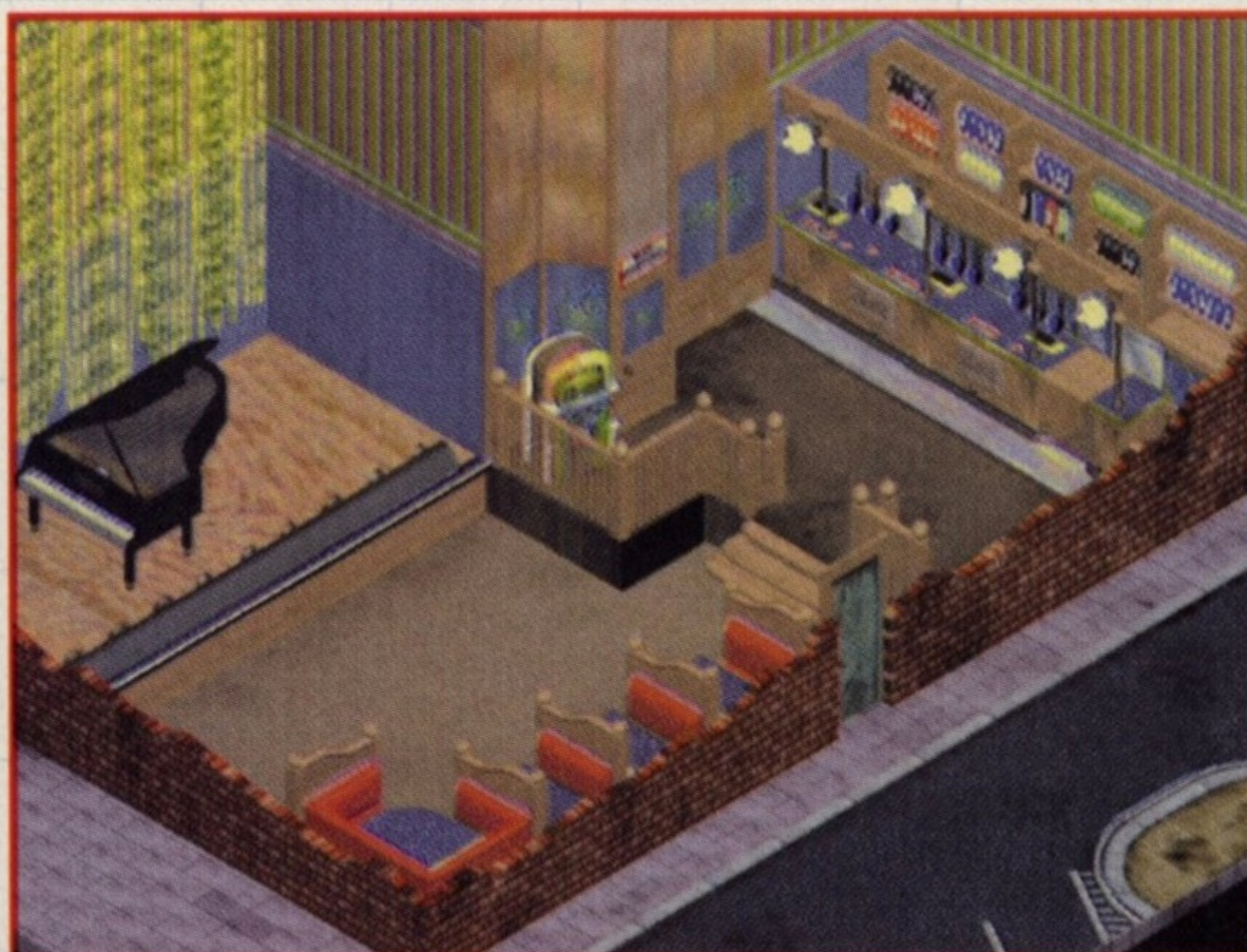
FROM RATS TO CATS

As with most games, through the course of its development, several things can change. Such is the case with *Firo & Klawd*, and to quite a degree. "The game has changed dramatically during development. One thing has remained constant though and that is the under-lying principals," remarks Philip. "We wanted a fun game, with action, depth. Good characters and locations for marketing, and a game different to everything else available,





[ABOVE] Is that an illegal drug manufacturing plant? I've a got a strange feeling.



[ABOVE] The pub is a haunt that Firo will want to frequent on many occasions.

"The fundamental concept was to create an action packed and visually stunning game."

Philip Oliver, Interactive Studios

whilst having as much to offer as the competition. The story has changed so many times, it's hard to believe that once it was a time-travelling game starring a rat! But every change has been for the best, even if we didn't all agree at the time!" Time-travelling with a rat?!? Interesting...

"We are really pleased with the way it's turned out. It's taken 18 months with ten people on the case, and usually people involved in a project so long hate playing it. However, everybody on the team likes playing it – although they are apprehensive, in case they find a bug!" An interesting point. If after a solid 18 months the team can still enjoy it, we might just too!

FUTURE MOOTS?

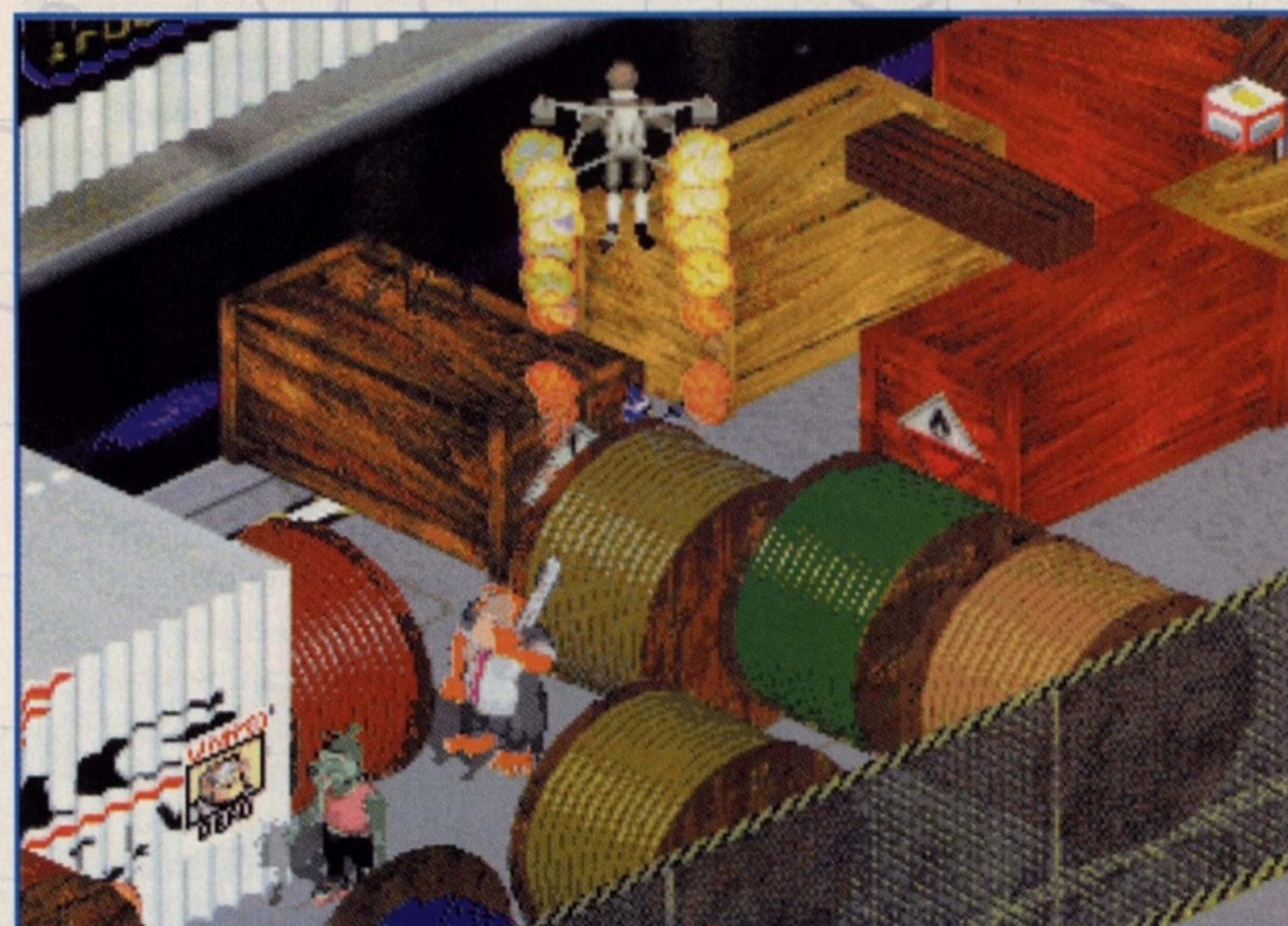
So how do you feel about the PlayStation, its power and its potential? Have you adopted the format wholeheartedly? Will you be developing games specifically for the PlayStation? How will you use the machine's power in the future? [Asks Asam in a somewhat over-zealous manner!]



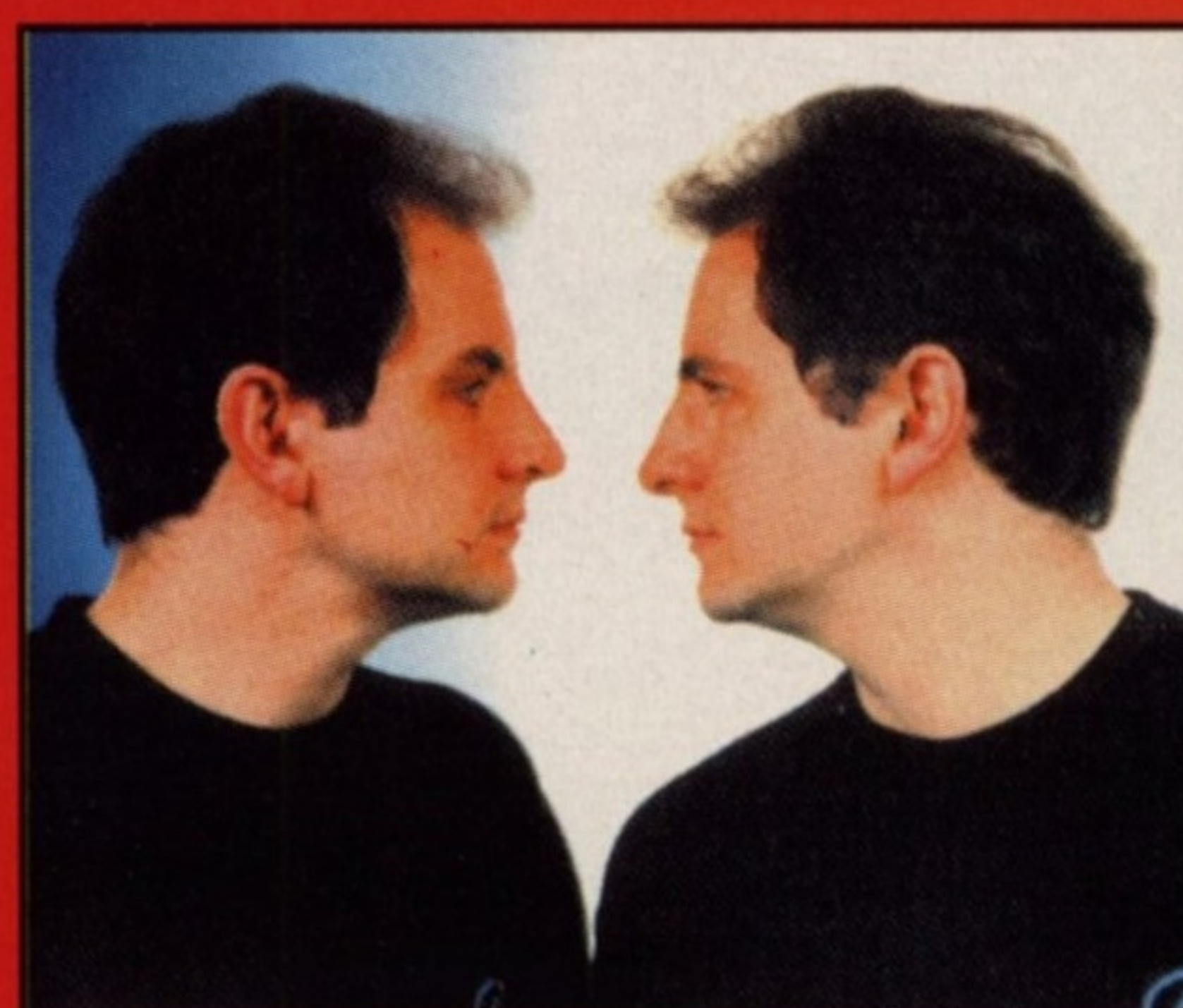
[ABOVE] The odd couple find themselves investigating a murder in a factory. Notice the chalk-line in the centre.

"Yes! We love the PlayStation, it's not perfect, but it's closer than any others, including the Nintendo 64, and with the price reduction (to under £200) it's getting even closer. We are already working on two major releases for the PlayStation which are at present top secret.

The PlayStation has the ability to throw around vast volumes of polygons. We intend to use this, but cleverly. So many games rely on this feature to sell boring game concepts." Thankfully, with *Firo & Klawd*, we seem to have the makings of a very smart game. Here's looking to September. Philip Oliver, I thank you.



[ABOVE] A villain makes his escape using a jet pack strapped to his back. Firo asks for a lift to the nearest pub.



THE OLIVER TWINS. PHILIPS AND ANDREW. OR IS IT ANDREW AND PHILIP...?



[BULLY]



[CAROL]



[CIRIL]



[END BOSS]



[FERGUS]



[FINGERS]

PLAYSTATION

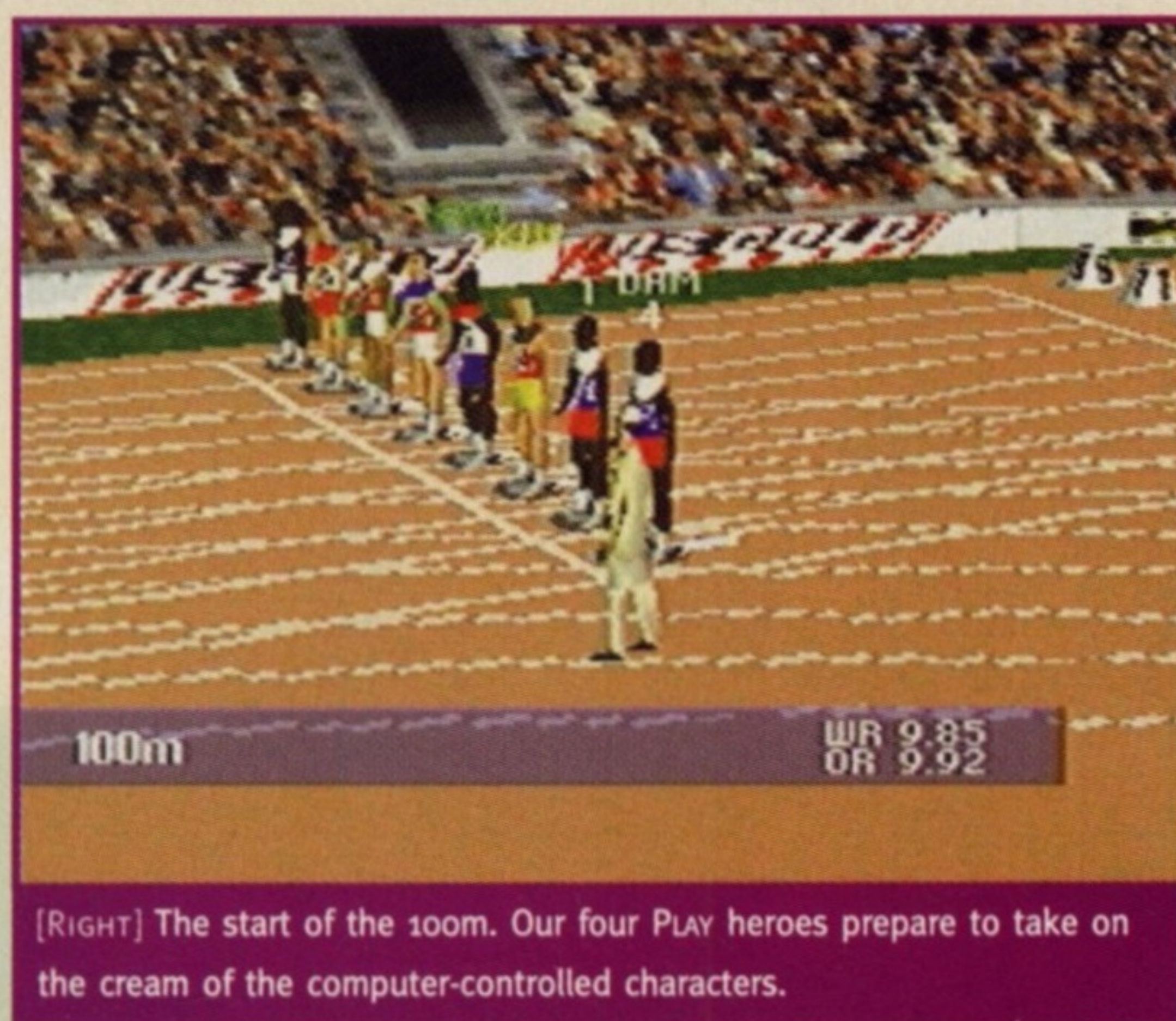
IN A SPIRIT OF RIVALRY REMINISCENT OF THE GAMES THEMSELVES, *OLYMPIC GAMES* AND *INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD* HAVE ARRIVED TO DO BATTLE FOR YOUR CASH. WHO WILL BE NUMBER ONE BUTTON-BASHER IN THE WORLD?

OLYMPIC GAMES VS

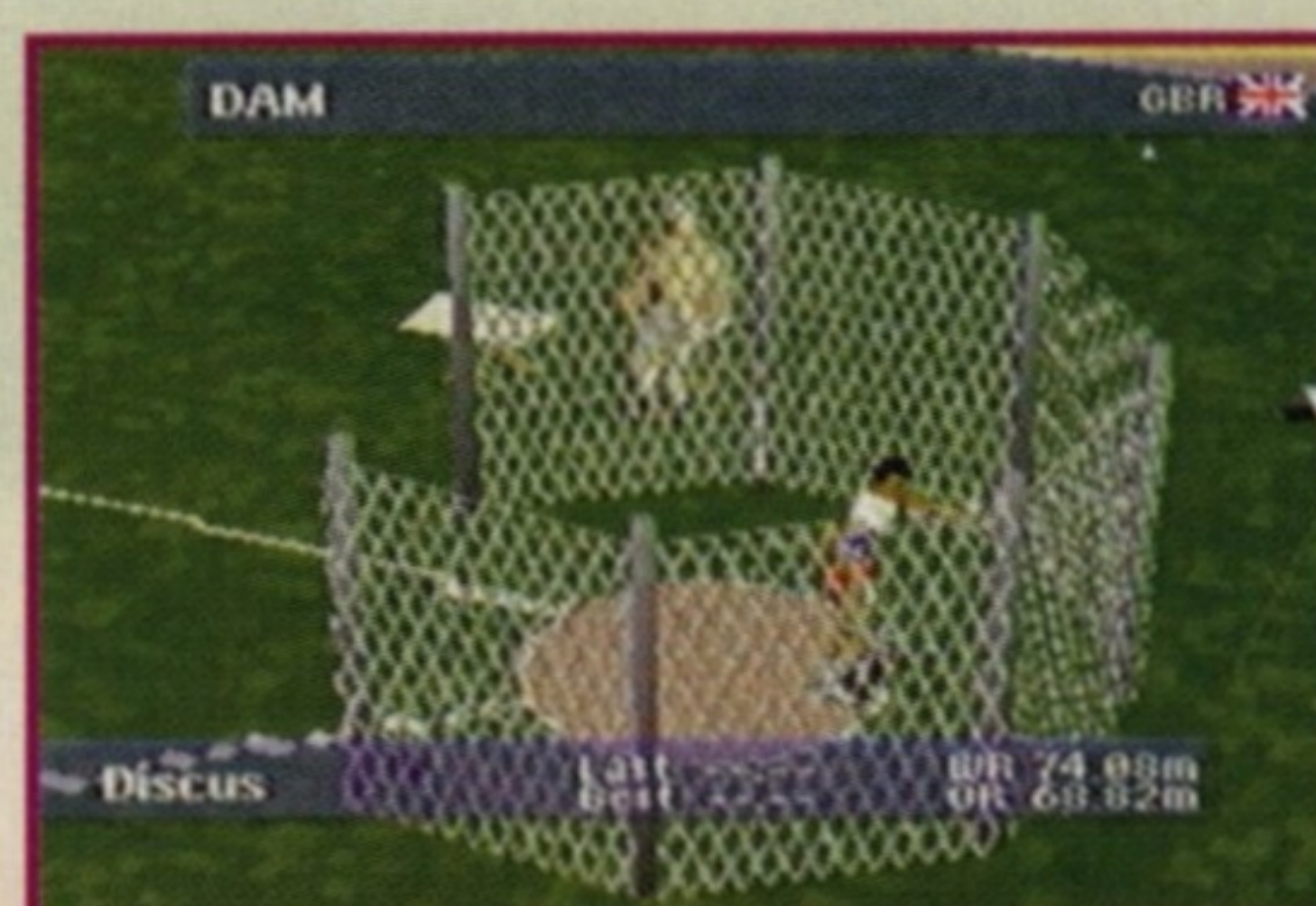
Bursting out of

the blocks and pounding down the track with sweat-glands streaming,

heart pumping and wrists hurting – you can't beat the competitive heat of athletics. Erm, hang on a minute, wrists hurting? For an Olympic athlete? Ah, ya got me. We're actually talking button-bashing here, the arrival of the two contestants for the PlayStation Olympics, *Olympic Games* from US Gold and *International Track & Field* from Konami. And the wrist business comes from adopting the fastest method of button pressing we've found, but more of that later. Really, you'll only want to splash out for one button bashing title – there is a limit to this type of game's appeal after all, so we've the two for a head-to-head.



[RIGHT] The start of the 100m. Our four PLAY heroes prepare to take on the cream of the computer-controlled characters.



[ABOVE] The common angle for field events is 45°, but in the discus it's a little lower. But I'm not going to tell you what.

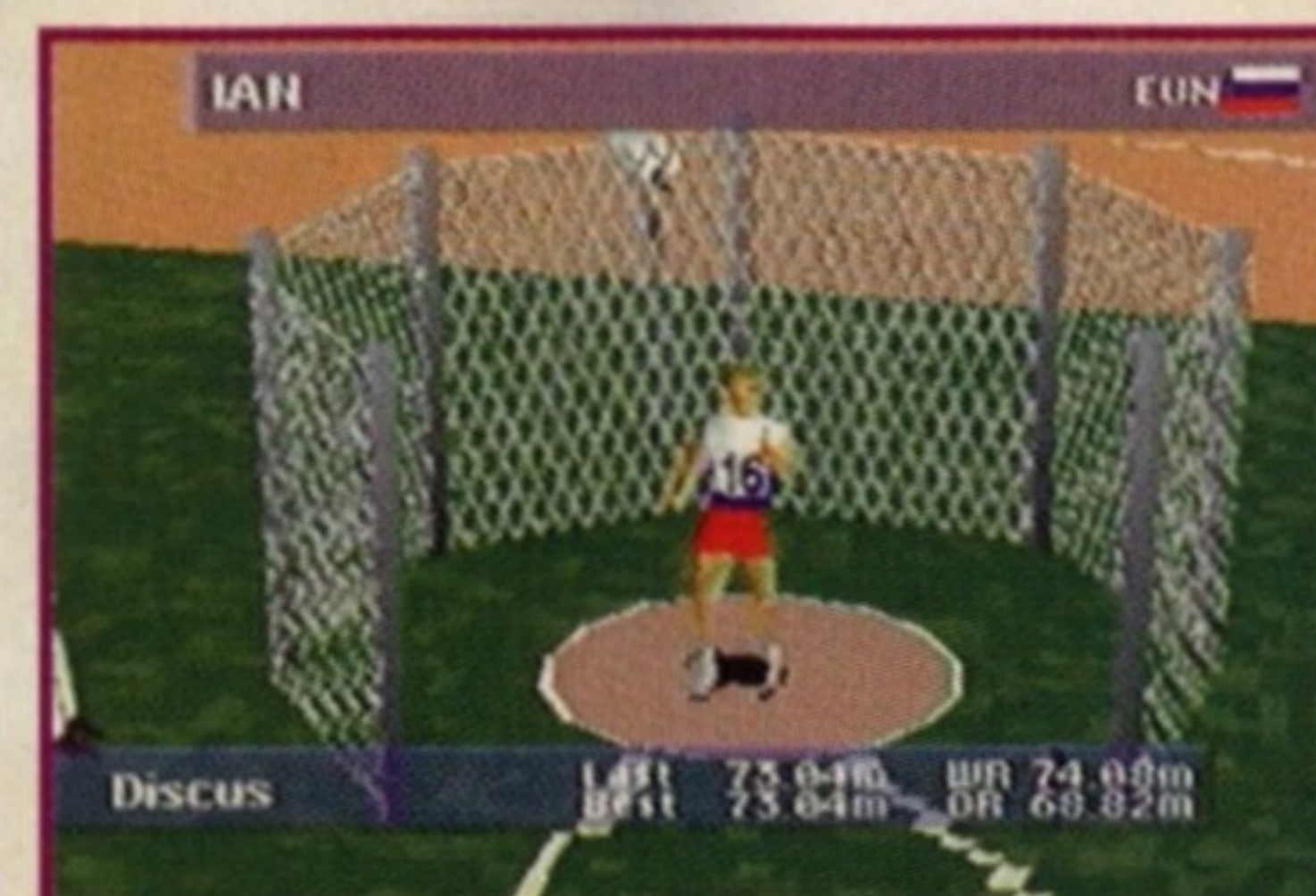


[ABOVE] And in this event, you throw by stopping the cursor bar in the yellow area. Hit it bang on the red line, and it's worth an extra five metres, or so.

OLYMPIC GAMES

The biggest impression the superbly rendered intro sequence of *Olympic Games* leaves you with is that all the development man hours were put into that and not the in-game visuals, y'know, the bits that matter. Hello, priorities anyone? Hell, the front end of the game (intro and menu screens), is very nicely done, but this is hardly going to compensate for the average appearance of the in-game stuff, is it? I mean, if these shots show the best work of the artists at developer Silicon Dreams, then publisher US Gold should work with someone else next time.

Apparently, the sprites have been motion-captured, what with? A ball of string and a box brownie? There's even some nasty slow down in the 400m, very disappointing. Anyway, let's be kind and call the graphics functional and move on. Actually, let's not. This is one sub-standard-looking game. Indeed, when you stand it alongside the Elle Macpherson of PlayStation



[ABOVE] Get it all completely right, like a certain reviewer managed here (ahem), and you'll challenge the world record.

games that is rival offering, *International Track & Field*, it looks like a cheap whore.

LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING

The reason for this tirade is that, once you play *Olympic Games* and then *International Track & Field*, you can't help noticing that each shows up the flaws of the other terribly. If you'd never seen *ITF*, you'd probably think the graphics in *OG* were perfectly acceptable, but when you see what can be done, and *ITF* is a superb looking game, it really irritates. Similarly, once you've enjoyed the subtlety and variety of playing *OG*, *ITF* seems a little shallow in the gameplay department.

Right, now that's off my chest, let's talk action, adrenaline and control. Let's

PLAY+ INFORMATION

Publisher: US Gold
Customer support: 0121 356 0831
Price: Approx £45
Release date: July



MULTIPLE PLAYERS MEMORY CARD



MULTI-TAP

N OLYMPICS

S INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD

EXCLUSIVE!

talk *Olympic Games* playability. Y'know the old saying about not judging a book by its cover? Well, it's true here. Because whilst *OG* might not be the best-looker in the gaming world, it certainly does the business when it comes to good old orgasmic gameplay.

FEEL THE QUANTITY

For a start, there is a lot to it. Not five, not ten, but a whopping 15 events to participate in. You also get the full Olympic experience, none of this poncy TV-influenced athletics-only monkey business (*ITF*, you are guilty, guilty, guilty). The addition of the shooting events (where you control a cross-hair and cope with factors such as moving targets, winds or an oppressive time limit) and the fencing add a much-needed extra facet to what

"Konami's International Track & Field looks drop-dead gorgeous..."

otherwise could be a distinctly cardboard-like gaming experience.

The eight players (only one joystick required, although should you be able to gather together two multi-taps and enough joypads, the option's there to go head-to-head in the 100m, 400m, swimming and fencing) can fight it out over the 100m, 400m, javelin, hammer, pole vault, high jump, triple jump, long jump, discus, skeet shooting, archery, rapid fire pistol shooting, 100m freestyle, weight lifting and, pause for breath, fencing. These have been split into five sections to make setting up custom challenges that bit easier.

A PAIR TO BE PROUD OF

Two events in particular scream out for a special mention. Whereas the control method is usually simply bash buttons like mad (■ and X are the default settings, but you can change them) and then hit another to jump/throw/whatever, two of the events need more input from the gamer than just button smashing. Both the 400m and the freestyle introduce a strategic element which is just tricky enough to require genuine skill.



[ABOVE] It's vital to get your shots off in the time allowed. Asam here has failed to fire twice and thus only scored 78/100.



[ABOVE] The CPU characters give you a real challenge. Of the PLAY team in this race, only Damian has managed to beat even one of them.

Instead of hammering buttons like a hyperactive chimp, the gamer has to bear in mind the requirements of the stamina bar. Take away too much strength by going at a flat out pace and your sprite soon begins to look heavy-legged. Were stamina to totally erode, this could be disastrous, with players totally unable to reach

CONTROL YOURSELF!

BUTTON-BASHING, JUST HOW COMPLEX CAN IT BE? SURELY ALL YOU DO IS HIT THE BUTTONS, YEAH? UH-UH, THAT'S THE VOICE OF AN AMATEUR. OUT OF THE MOST HUMBLE OF BEGINNINGS COMES CREATIVITY AND INSPIRATION. THE PLAY TEAM HAS BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH FOUR MAIN METHODS OF CONTROL, ALL IN THE QUEST TO GET AN ADVANTAGE.



[THE SIDE-TO-SIDE SLEEVE SWIPE]

PROS: VERY QUICK

CONS: NOT EVERYONE CAN DO IT

DEVOTEES: IAN, SIMON (FROM POWERSTATION)



[THE TWO FINGERED SLAM]

PROS: NATURAL FEEL

CONS: SLOW, JOYPAD NOT STABLE.

DEVOTEES: STEVE



[THE CHEATING GIT]

PROS: CAN BE BLINDINGLY QUICK

CONS: DIFFICULT TO KEEP A FAST RHYTHM

DEVOTEES: IAN & ASAM (ITF ONLY)

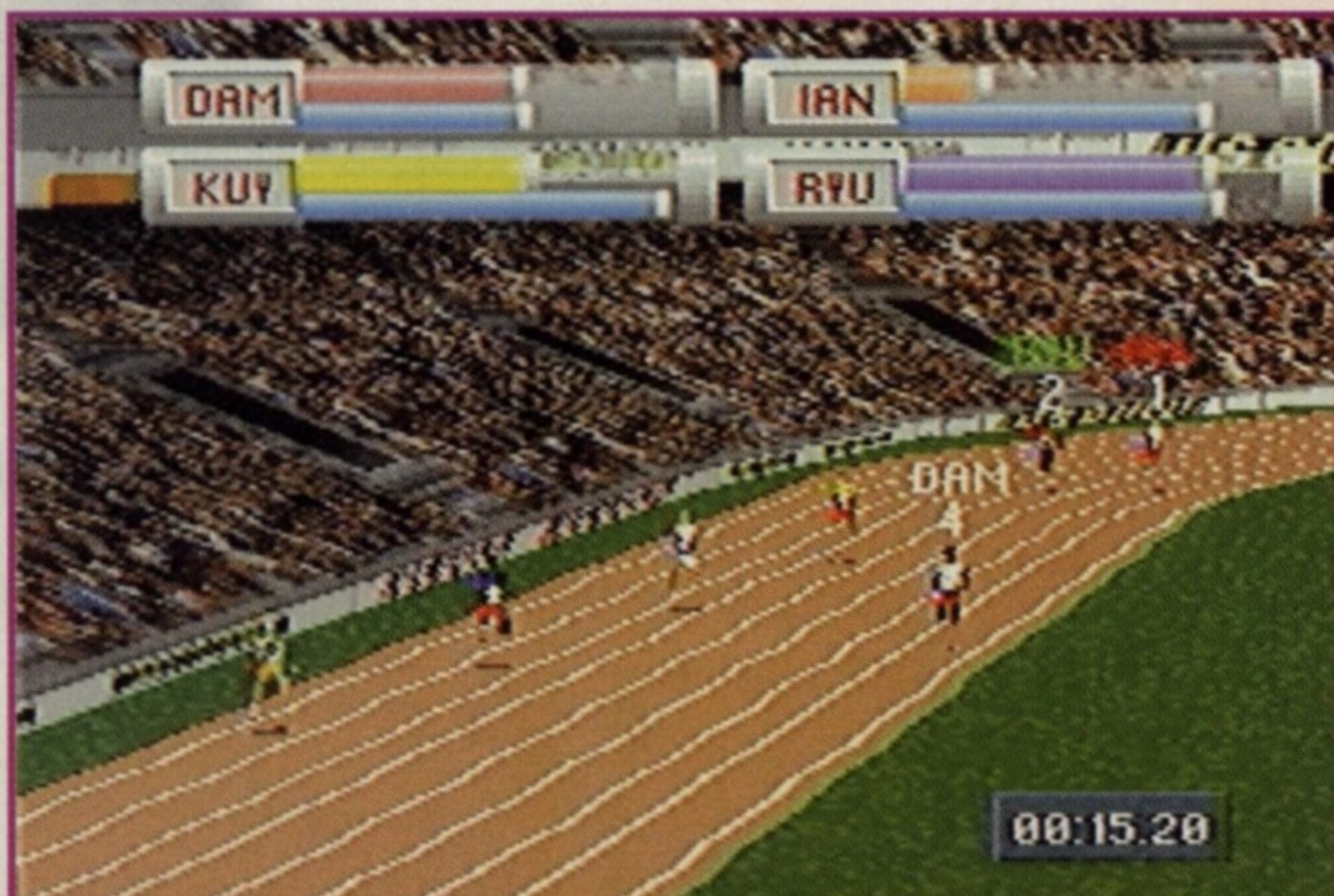


[THE DOUBLE FINGER PRESS]

PROS: EASY, QUICK

CONS: PUTS TOO MUCH DEMAND ON FINGERS

DEVOTEES: ASAM, DAMIAN, RYAN



[ABOVE] It's the 400m and Damian has rather hot-headily charged off at the start. See how his blue stamina bar is much lower than the others.

"Olympics might not be the best looking in the world but it knows how to deliver orgasmic gameplay!"



even a minimum speed, leading to frustration. As it is, though, the bar never goes below (roughly) quarter strength, which means that if you can hit buttons quick enough, you can hold off players with more stamina who are rapidly catching you up. It all makes for climatic finishes although realism, does, to some degree, go out of the window.

Get the timing right and your player can explode down the final stretch, travelling at twice the speed of the worn-out guy ahead to pull off a more impressive comeback than Mike Tyson's.

TECHNIQUE IS EVERYTHING

The technical thought put into all the aspects which affect playability is impressive in *Olympic Games*. There is actually a second control method, the grandly titled "Olympic", which involves timing button presses to match a moving cursor. But it's very difficult to make it work well and your times suffer as a result. Nice try though.

There is, however, plenty of choice on how to play. Those besotted by the actions of Britain's heroes in Atlanta next month (surely we'll have some) can choose to take the purist's route and compete in heats (first and second qualify) and finals against up to 29 other opponents in the quest for gold, silver and bronze.

Arcade fans can take the events in turn (choosing to skip any that don't appeal) to rack up the most points to decide the winner (an average score is 10,000 per event). Best of all though, is the challenge mode. Here, a maximum of eight players compete in whichever events you select. If there's less than eight players, then the computer fills the vacant slots with some impressive



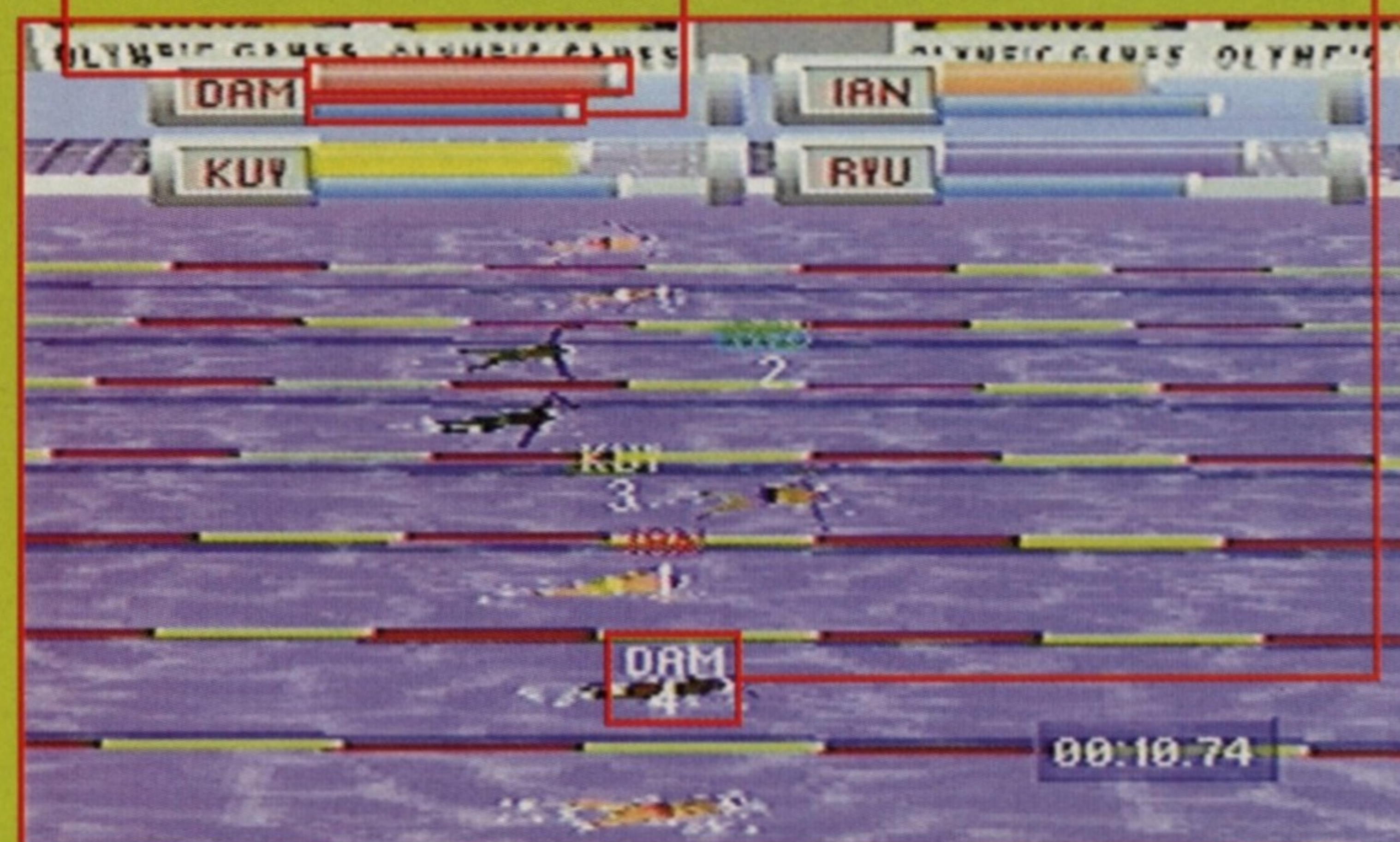
IT'S ALL ABOUT...TIMING

HERE'S A VISUAL EXAMPLE OF HOW HAVING TO BALANCE SPEED AND STAMINA AFFECTS THE RACE.

This is your current speed bar, shown by the rate of your button pressing divided by your stamina.

This is stamina, which never falls below roughly quarter strength.

Colours, name and a number makes picking out your guy easy.



[ABOVE] Coming up to the turn and all four PLAY lads have gone out quickly (ahead of the CPU characters) and haven't much strength left.



[ABOVE] Since the turn, Damian has eased off, falling behind but keeping vital stamina. KV and Ryan are worn out (as usual - Ed)



[ABOVE] Damian's decision to ease back for a final sprint has paid off, he just snatches the touch. Gaming moments don't get much better...

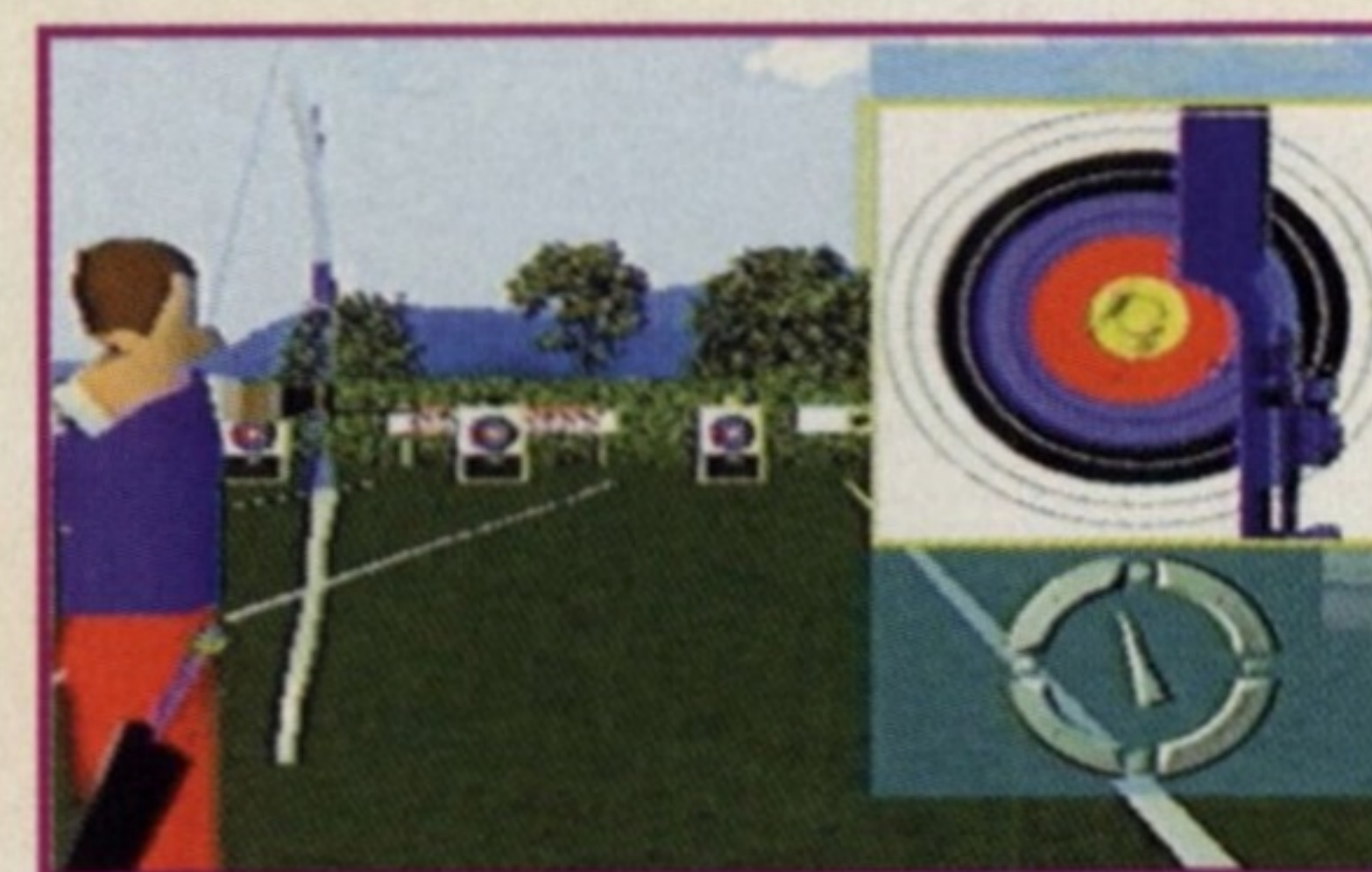
AI-controlled CPU athletes.

Actually, more needs to be made of this. How many games can boast computer players who actually provide a decent challenge? Very few. After playing this game for more time than I'd care to admit, I can still find myself trailing home fifth or six in the 400m if I miss-time a sprint. The one player game, for once, will last much longer than usual.

Olympic Games is definitely the most playable of the two on offer this issue, and I have no doubt that the Play team will keep playing it long after the flame has been extinguished, but it's just a shame that it looks roughly drawn and lacks the attention to detail of Konami's effort. Speaking of which...



[ABOVE] Asam moves his sight quick enough to catch up with the yellow disc and shatters it with his left barrel in the skeet shooting event.



PLAY

LOOKS: ●●●●●○○○○○
SOUNDS: ●●●●●○○○○○
GAMEPLAY: ●●●●●●●●●○
VALUE: ●●●●●●●●○○○
SOLOPLAY: ●●●●●●●●○○○

PLAYED 89%

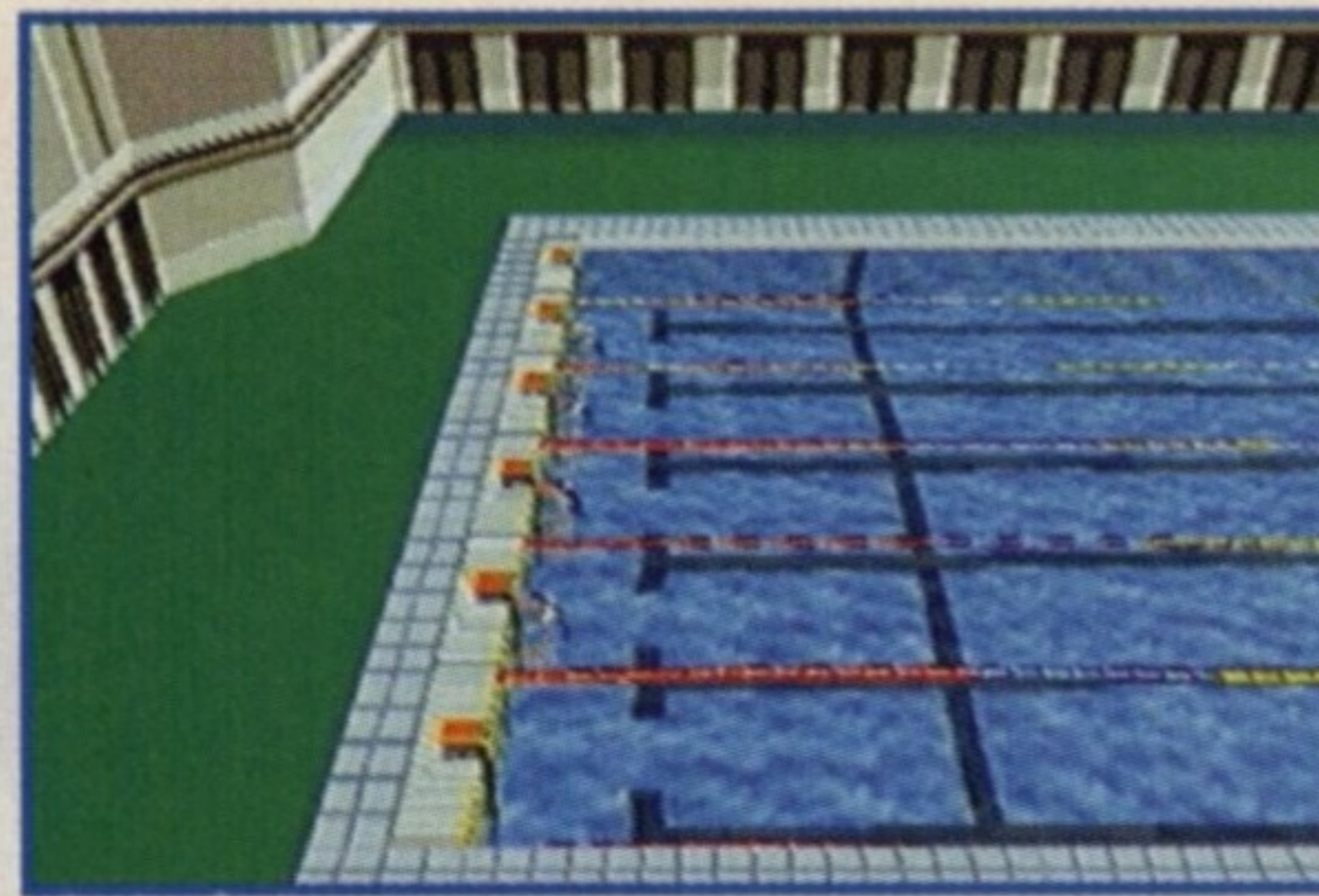
Looks average, plays wonderfully

ALTERNATIVELY:

INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD (84%)
DECATHLON (OUT NOV)



[ABOVE] After the sprints, the short delay between "set" and the gun in the swimming can come as bit of a surprise. That's my excuse anyway.



INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD

Drool cups

at the ready graphics-fiends, because Konami's *International Track & Field* (the officially-licensed Olympic tie-in for Japan) has drop-dead gorgeous visuals that put US Gold's game to shame. All backed up, moreover, with great sound effects, ranging from the thud of foot on runway to that shrill klaxon signalling the start of an event. The old chestnut about having an arcade machine in your living room certainly applies in this case – anyone wishing to re-live the *Track & Field* coin-op experience will cream their jeans over *ITF*.

But, as I've said, looks aren't everything. Hey, sometimes they aren't even anything. It would be grossly unfair to condemn *ITF* because it doesn't have the depth of *Olympic Games* – it doesn't, but never mind – as it's not exactly totally lacking. Taken on its own, the inclusion of 11 different events and a four player option (if you've got a multi-tap) seems plenty. By the way, the 11 events featured here are the 100m sprint, triple jump, hammer, high jump, 110m hurdles

(which is excellent), 100m freestyle swim, shot put, long jump, discus, pole vault and javelin.

Competition is arcade-influenced all the way, with players having to meet a qualifying standard (three difficulty levels) to progress to the next event. You can also pick up points along the way, a thousand representing an average score performance in each event.

A SKIN-DEEP BEAUTY?

There's obviously been a fair bit of thought put into the gameplay as well. One good example being the method used to reach 45° in the throwing/jumping events. Instead of simply holding down a button and releasing at the desired angle, the gamer has to cope with substantially different speeds of



PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Konami
Customer support: 01895 853000
Price: £44.99
Release date: June 28



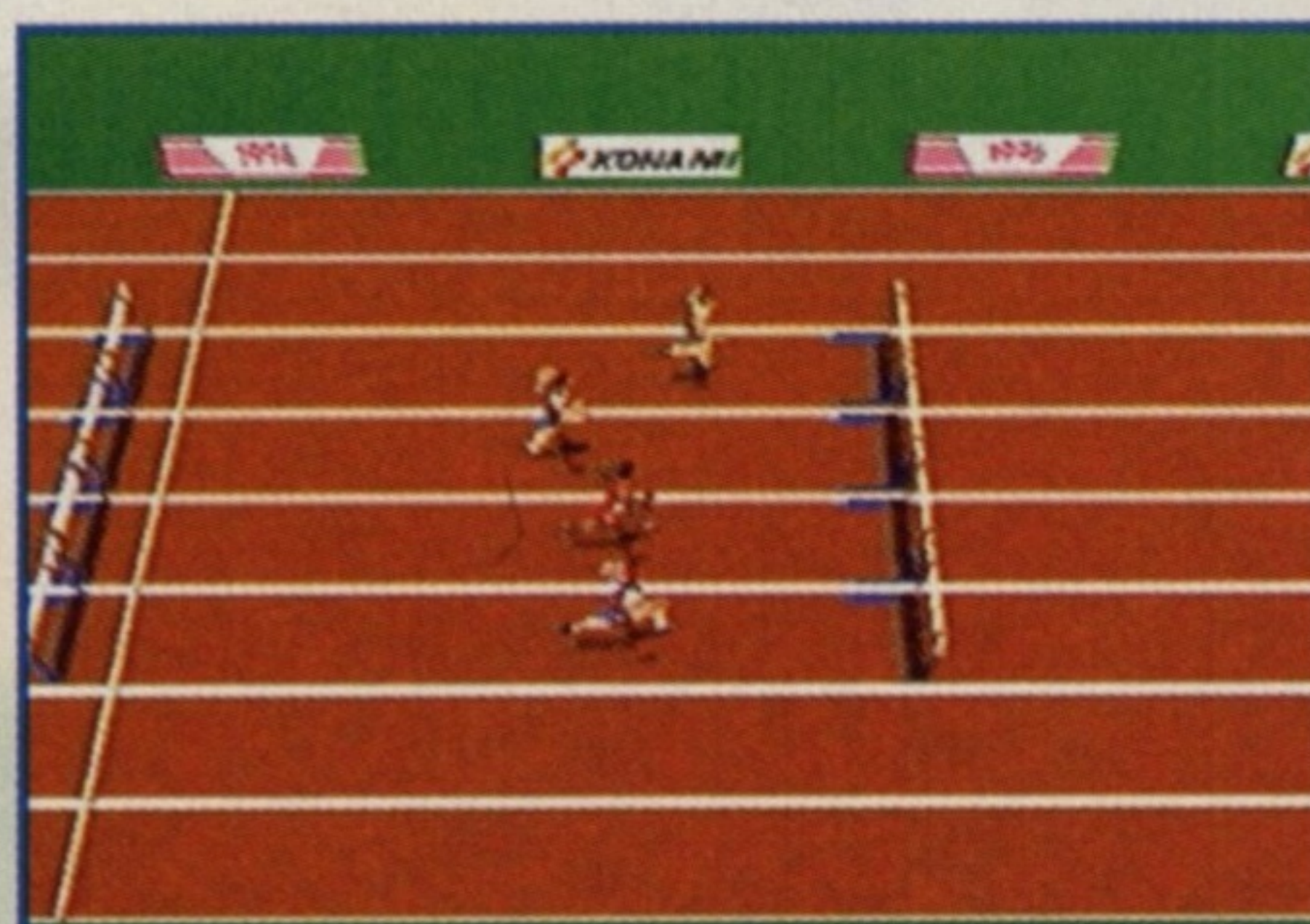
MUTIPLE PLAYERS MEMORY CARD



MULTI-TAP



[ABOVE] The CPU characters are programmed to keep pace with you and do early on, but not once you become proficient.



[ABOVE] The camera pans out quickly in the 110m hurdles. It has to, screw up one jump and you could be miles behind.

FOURPLAY FUN

BOTH *OLYMPIC GAMES* AND *INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD* ARE SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED AS FOUR PLAYER GAMES SO WHY NOT HAVE FOUR OPINIONS AS TO THE BEST?

IAN LYNCH:

The inclusion of the extra gameplay element in the stamina bar in the 400m and 100m freestyle swim, and the shooting events means I'd have to pick *Olympic Games*.

DAMIAN BUTT:

Konami's game is the mutt's nuts when it comes to graphics – I simply cannot get over how good it looks. Although the gameplay isn't as intuitive as *OG*, I'd still rate *T&F* slightly ahead because it feels like a next gen game and *OG* doesn't.

ASAM AHMAD:

With the slick presentation of *T&F*, it makes you wonder why US Gold's effort is somewhat lacking. Despite the slightly tighter gameplay in *OG*, the overall look and feel of *T&F* will sway punters.

STEVE HARDY:

Both games are fantastic for multi-player laughs, and although *Olympic Games* looks basic, it's more enjoyable to play.

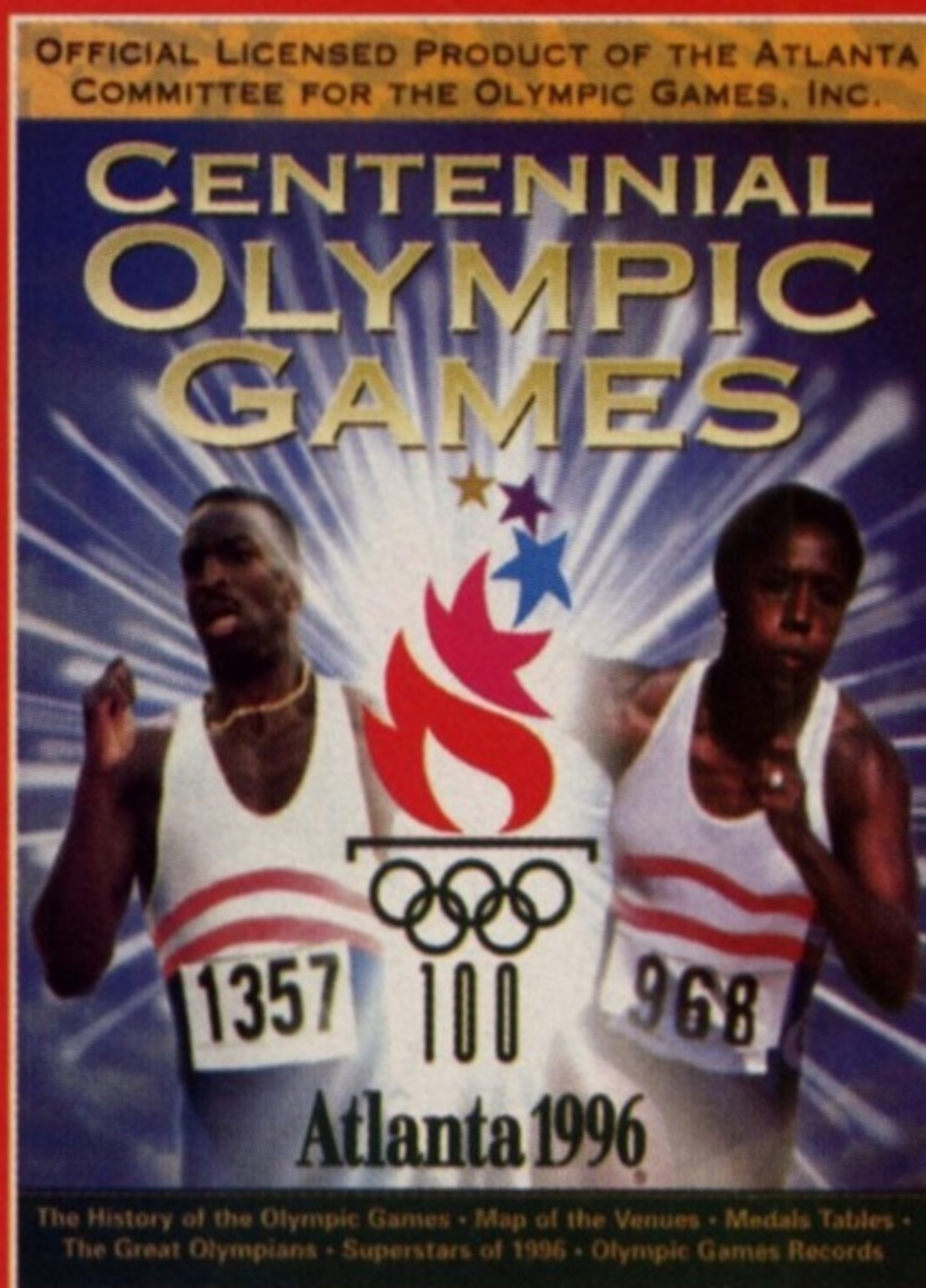
WIN, WIN, WIN!

FOR THOSE WONDERING WHAT ALL THE FUSS ABOUT THIS OLYMPICS THING IS, OR SPORTS NUTS WANTING A HANDY COMPANION GUIDE, PLAY HAS 15 COPIES OF CENTENNIAL OLYMPIC GAMES TO GIVE AWAY. PRODUCED BY CARLTON BOOKS, THE OFFICIALLY-LICENSED A4-SIZED TITLE CONTAINS 84 PAGES OF FACTS, PICTURES, PROFILES AND A FULL PROGRAMME OF THE ALL THE EVENTS. BRILLIANT!

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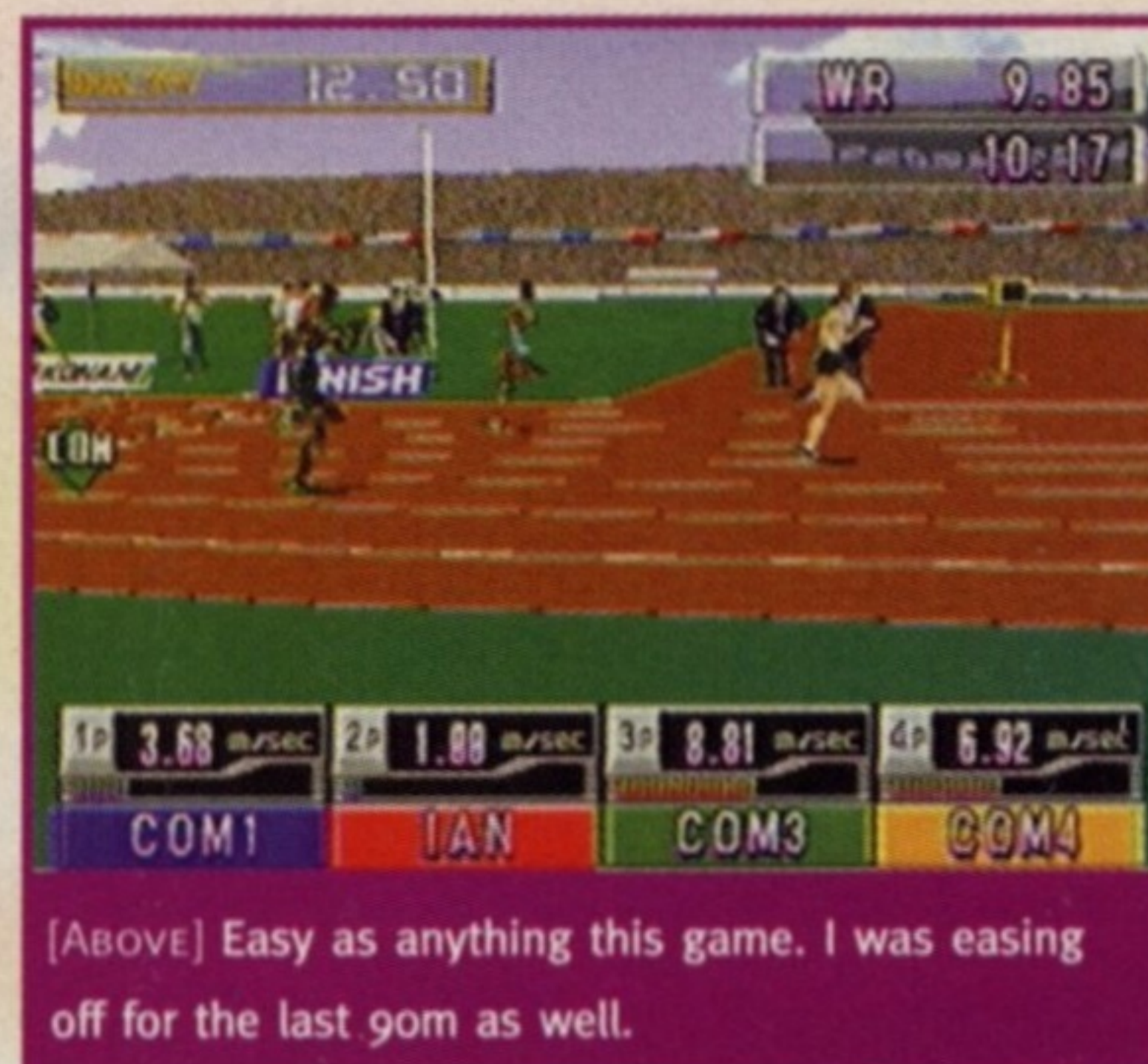
IN THIS REVIEW, OG STANDS FOR:

- A. ORIGINAL GANGSTER
- B. OH GOSH
- C. OLYMPIC GAMES

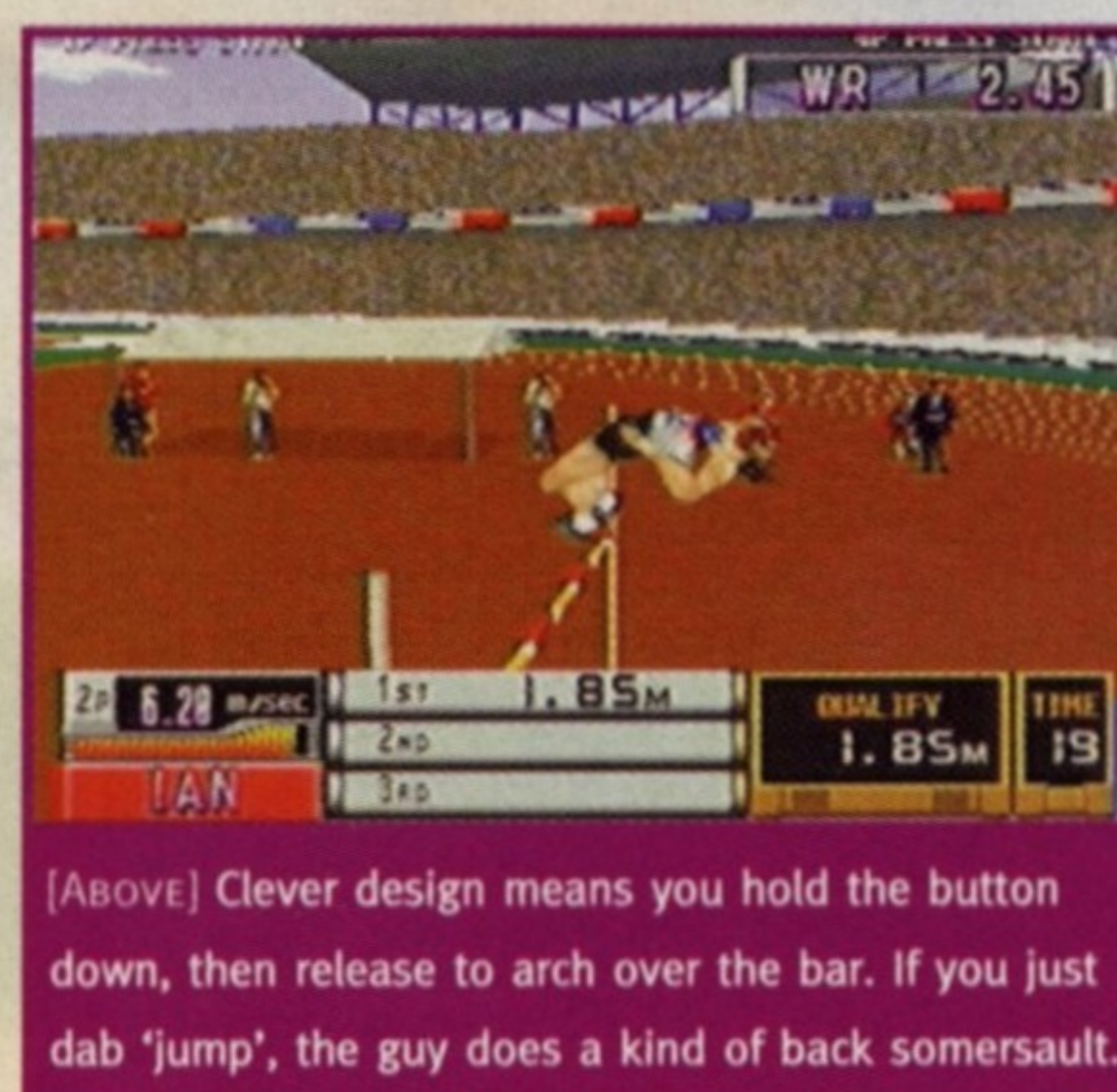


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OG STANDS FOR OLYMPIC GAMES
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[ABOVE] Easy as anything this game. I was easing off for the last 90m as well.



[ABOVE] Clever design means you hold the button down, then release to arch over the bar. If you just dab 'jump', the guy does a kind of back somersault.

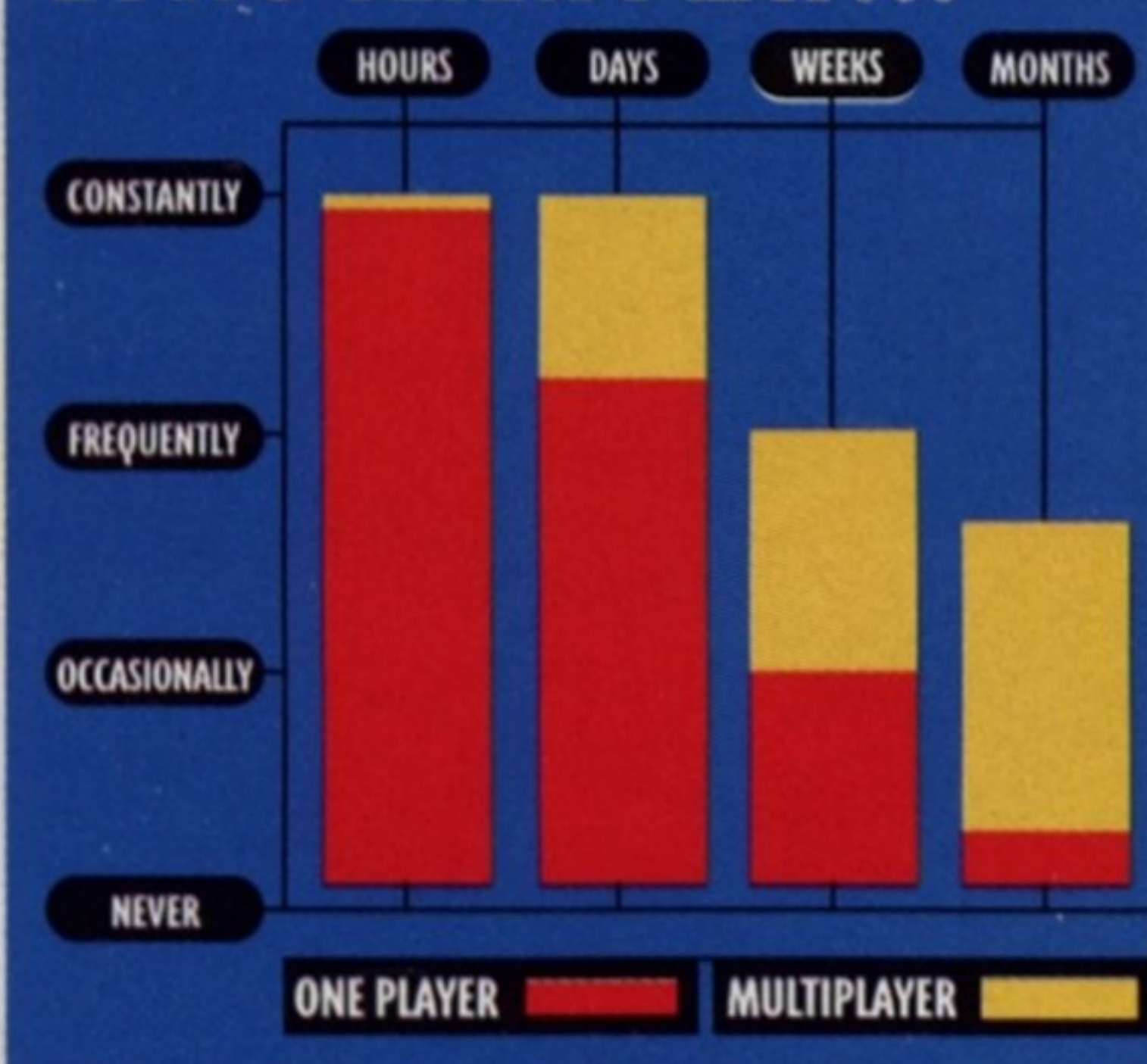
angle acceleration. That's to say that a quick dab on the pad results in a 30° take off angle in the long jump, but that figure flies up to over 40° using the same amount of pressure in the hammer event.

Also, events like the shot, hammer and discus require you to start pressing the 'throw' button whilst still spinning, making judgement significantly more difficult. The gamer is helped out a little by a pointer which shows the direction the discus/shot/hammer would be released if you were to launch into your throw at that particular moment, but it's tricky. A bit too darn tricky if you ask me.

DEVIOS REVIEWERS 1, INT TRACK & FIELD 0

Unfortunately, *ITF* is a game you can learn to beat quite easily. Change the default set up so that n and l are the run

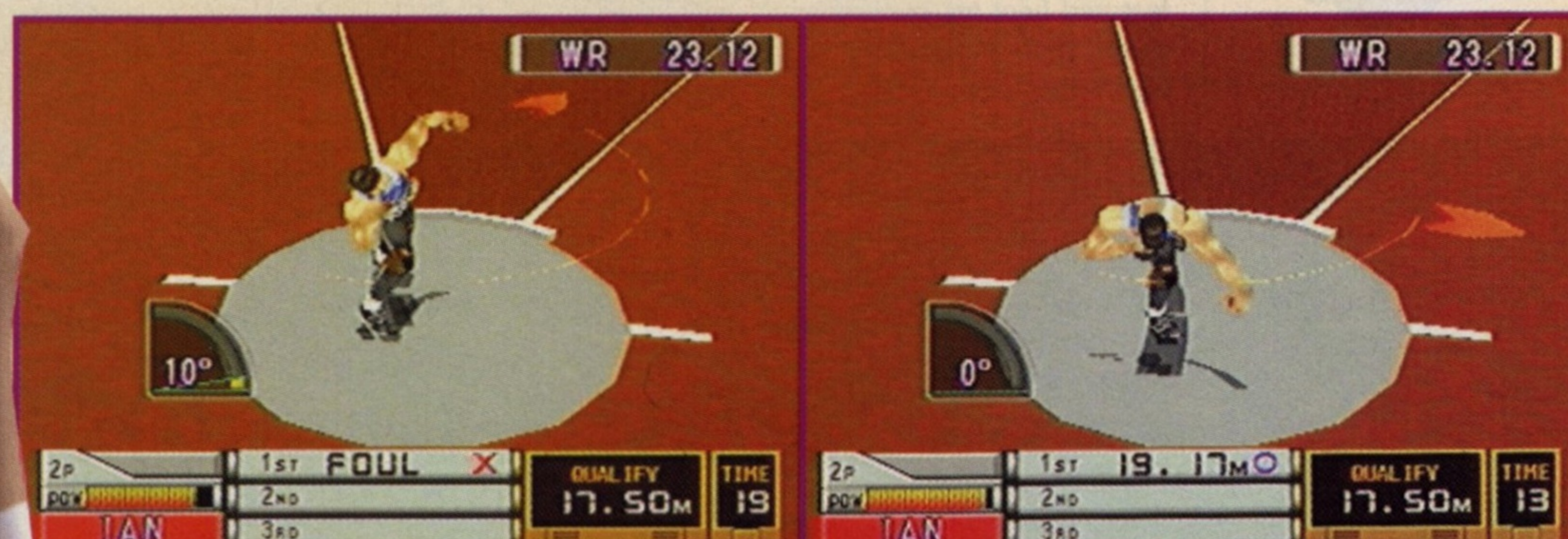
LONG TERM PLAY...



“Played side-by-side, each game tends to show up the flaws of the other something rotten...”

buttons, pick up a lighter, or other artificial button abusing device device (no steroids references, please) and you can pull off incredible times. In *Olympic Games*, the frequency is set so that even when using something tougher than a finger, only about 9.5 seconds is possible on a perfect run in the 100m. Whereas Asam and his Clipper lighter has actually managed a time of 8.14 seconds for the 100m in *ITF*. It kind of makes beating the qualifying standard a bit easy.

Also, *ITF* really suffers as a one player game because the CPU characters don't offer any kind of competition once you



[ABOVE] The shot put is the third event, and is your first introduction to trying to time a throw when your sprite is spinning. It takes a few goes to get right.

[ABOVE] Learn to use the pointer as the indicator to start pressing throw. Of course, it's an entire coincidence that it's in this position in the picture. Nod, wink.

**DEVELOPERS WANTING
LESSONS ON HOW TO
PRODUCE AN INTRO SHOULD TAKE
A LOOK AT THE AWESOME ITF.**



[ABOVE] This is the last event, and you'll notice I've beaten the world record twice. Didn't take long.



[ABOVE] In the hammer, your character spins around faster and faster and faster and faster and urgggh! (that's you releasing it).

with some mates after the pub, then *ITF* has the definite edge over *Olympic Games*, but not by much. Overall, *Olympic Games* is our gold medal winner because it plays better and that's what counts in the long run.

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●○
VALUE	●●●●●●●○
SOLOPLAY	●●●●●●○

PLAYED 85%

ALTERNATIVELY:
OLYMPIC GAMES (89%)
DECATHLON (OUT NOV)

	OLYMPIC GAMES	INT TRACK & FIELD	WINNER
PRESENTATION	OKAY	FIRST CLASS	ITF
INSTANT APPEAL	GOOD	FANTASTIC	ITF
MULTI-PLAYER COMPETITION	EXCELLENT	BRILLIANT	TIE
MAX NUMBER OF PLAYERS	EIGHT	FOUR	OG
CPU CHARACTERS	INTELLIGENT	USELESS	OG
MODES OF PLAY	THREE	ONE	OG
CONTROL METHODS	TWO	ONE	OG
NUMBER OF EVENTS	15	11	OG
UNIQUE EVENTS	400M, FENCING,	110M HURDLES,	
	SKEET SHOOTING,	SHOT-PUT	
	WEIGHTLIFTING,		
	RAPID-FIRE SHOOTING,		
	ARCHERY		OG
KNACKERED FINGERS SYNDROME	TIRING	EXHAUSTING	OG
TOTAL	SEVEN WINS	TWO WINS	OG



A l'attention des commerçants

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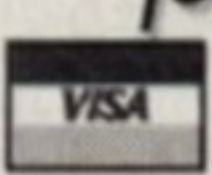
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WALL OF GAME

OF



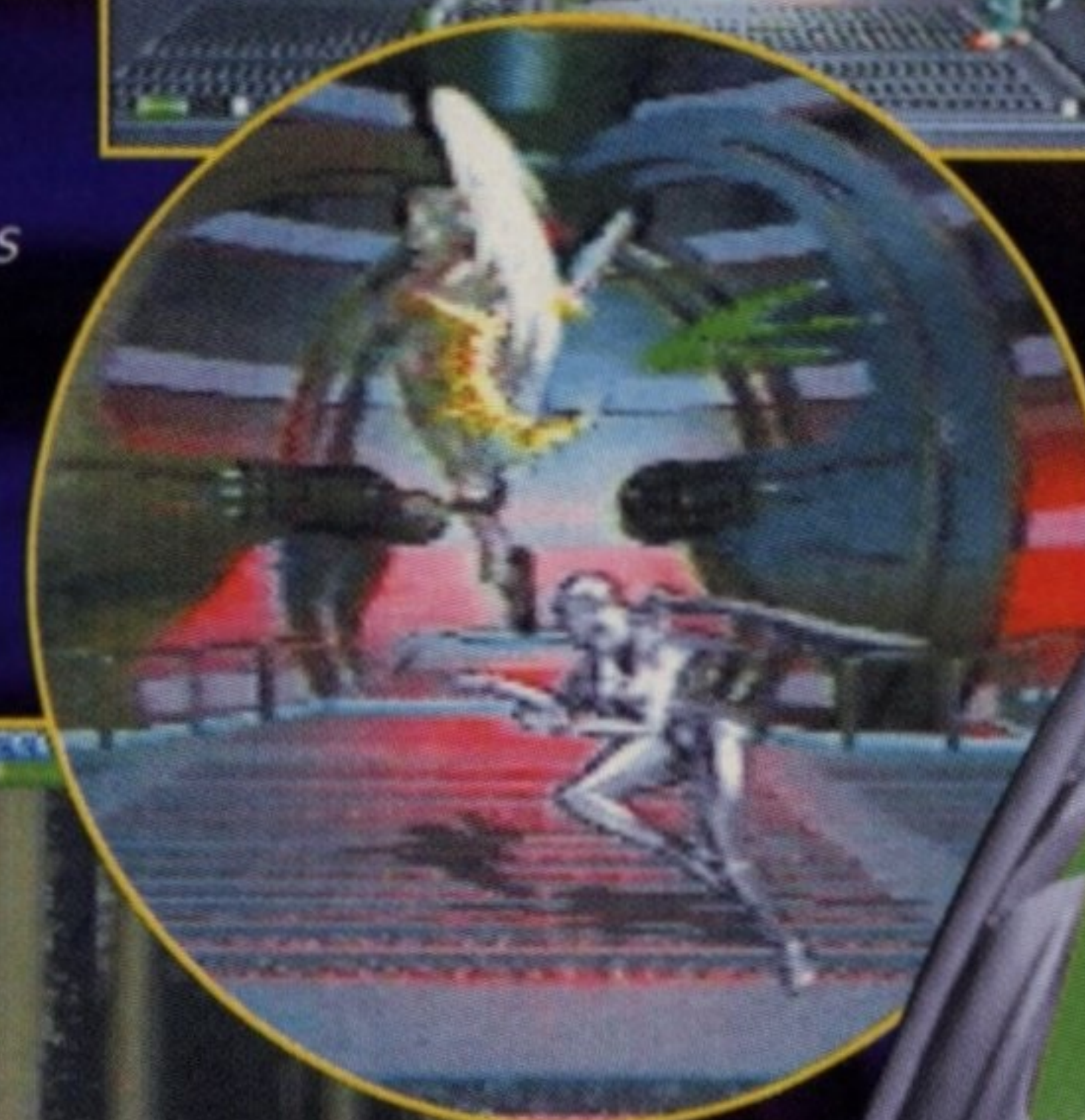
RISE OF THE ROBOTS 2: RESURRECTION

PLAY+
INFORMATION

Publisher: Acclaim
Customer Support: 0171 344 5000
Price: £44.99
Release Date: Out Now

RISE 2 CAME as a bit of a surprise to us all – it featured twice as many robot fighters as the original with more special moves than ever before. In fact, it's possible to pull off multi combos which inflict around 40 hits on the unlucky opponent! Each robot has a special "Termination" move and we've listed them all here for your convenience. Happy scrapping!

Not every move in *Rise Of The Robots* has a particular name – please note that some moves are marked SSM, indicating that they are Super Special Moves.



PLAY+
PLAYED 88%
Back with a vengeance!



WALL OF

GAME

8

RISE OF THE ROBOTZ 2: REFLECTION

VANDAL

Buzzsaw Attack – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Jet Kick (mid air) – Right, Right, K
Multiple Acid Spit – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Termination – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P

Termination – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P



VITRIOL

Dash Forward – Right, Right, Right
Cannon Fire – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Uppercut – Down, Down+Right, P
Swandive (mid air) – Down, Down, K
Swandive – Right, Right, K
Air Strike – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Termination – Down, Down + Left, Left, K

Termination – Down, Down + Left, Left, K

CYBORG

Shoulder Barge – Left, Left, Right, K
Flying Punch – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Mid Air Fireball – Right, Right, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Super Pagga – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Termination – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P

Termination – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P



PRIME-8

Ground Bash – Down, Down, Down, P
Swandive – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Barrel Roll – Down, Up, K
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Super Barrel Roll – Down, Left, Down, Left, K
Termination – Right, Right, Right, Right, Right, Right, P

Termination – Right, Right, Right, Right, Right, Right, P

LOADER

Lightning – Right, Right, Down, P
Headbutt – Down, Up, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Lightning Spikes – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Termination – Right, Down + Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, K

Termination – Right, Down + Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, K



CRUSHER

Dive (mid air) – Down, Down, P
Uppercut – Down, Down+Right, Right, P

WAR

Barrell Roll – Down, Up, P
Snap Kick – Down, Down+Left, Left, K
Skin Forward – Right, Right, P

ROOK

Double Punch – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Jet Kick – Down, Down+Right, Right, K

VI-HYPER

Drop Kick – Left, Left, K
Low Headwhip – Right, Down+Right, Down, Left, K



DEADLIFT

Sword Charge – Left, Left, Right, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Fireball – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Low Fireball – Left, Down+Left, Down, P
High Fireball – Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Teleport – Right, Right, K
Super Pagga – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, K

Termination – Left, Left, Left, K



DETAIL

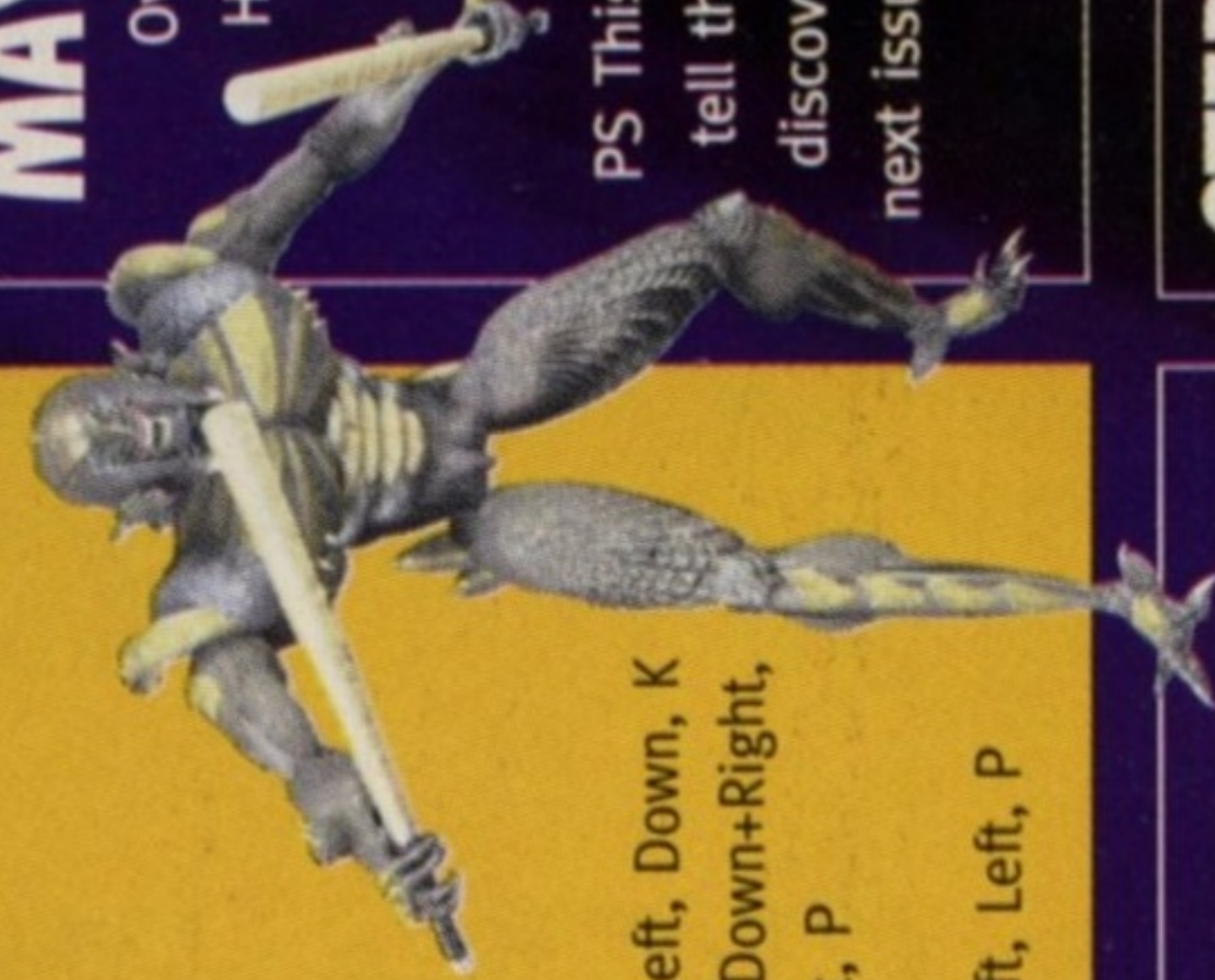
3 Hit Chaos – Right, Right, P
Run – Right, Right, Right
Headbutt – Down, Up, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Lazer – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P

Termination – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, K

INSANE

Low Iceball – Down, Down+Left, Left, K
Bat Attack – Down, Down+Right, Right, K
Iceball – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Super Pagga – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P

Termination – Left, Left, Left, P



MAYHEM

Overhead Smash – Right, Right, P
Head Butt – Right, Right, K
Super Pagga – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P

PS This one's a hidden character! We'll tell those of you who haven't discovered him how to find Mayhem next issue.

LOCKJAW

Throw – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, K
Missile – Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Headbutt – Down, Down+Right, Right, K
Mid Air Missile – Right, Right, P
Multiple Missiles – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P

Termination – Left, Left, Right, P

STEPPENWOLF

Cannon – Down, Down + Right, Right, P
Run – Right, Right, Right
Uppercut – Down, Down+Right, P
Airstrike – Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Swandive (mid air) – Down, Down, K
Swandive – Right, Right, K
Guns – Left, Left, Left, P
Super Air Strike – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P

Termination – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, K

ANIL-8

Fireball – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Jet Kick (mid air) – Right, Right, K
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Lightning Strike – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P

Termination – Down, Down, Left, P



SALVO

Knife – Right, Down+Right, Down, P
Flame thrower – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Multiple Firethrow – Down, Down+Right, Right, K

Termination – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, K

SUIKWAN

Mid Air Jet Kick – Right, Right, K
Fireball – Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Projected Sword Attack – Right, Right, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Spinning Battle Dress – Right, Right, Right, Right, P

Termination – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P

GRILLER

Ground Bash – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Pummel – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Slap Attack – Left, Right, Right, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Foundation Crumble – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, K

Termination – Right, Right, Right, P

CHROMAX

Low Fireball – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Drill Dash – Right, Right, Right, K
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Head Throw – Left, Left, Left, P
Jump Jet Kick – Down, Down, Down, K

Termination – Left, Left, Right, P



ASSAULT

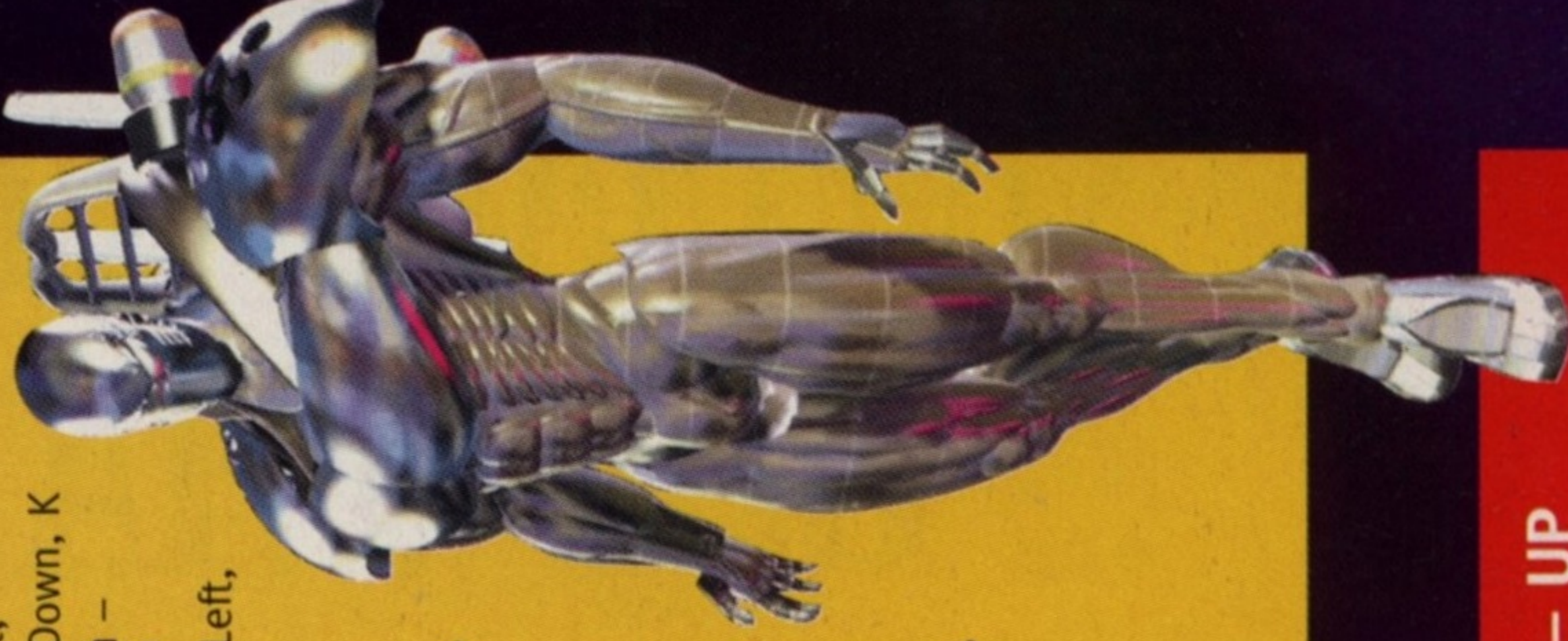
Jet Back – Left, Left
Double Punch (Dead) – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
Jet Kick – Down, Down, Right, K
Fireball – Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Jet Kick (mid air) – Right, Right, K

Termination – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, P

NECROBORG

Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
Flying Punch – Down, Up, P
Lightning – Left, Left, Left, P
SSM – Right, Down+Right, Down, Down+Left, Left, K

Termination – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, K



SUPERVISOR

Dash Attack – Down, Down+Left, Right, P
Spinning Low Jump – Down, Down+Left, Left, P
Mid Air Dash – Right, Right, P
SSM – Down, Down, Down, K

Termination – Left, Left, Right, Right, P*
*opponent must have only a quarter of max energy or less.



KEY:

▲ – UP
▼ – DOWN
◀ – LEFT
▶ – RIGHT
K – KICK
P – PUNCH

[NB] MANY MOVES SAY THAT YOU MUST PRESS: LEFT, DOWN+LEFT, DOWN, DOWN+RIGHT, RIGHT, K OR P. THIS INDICATES A HALF CIRCLE MOTION ON THE KEYPAD. THE DESCRIPTIONS ASSUME YOU ARE ON THE LEFT HAND OF THE SCREEN.

Skip Forward – Right, Right, Right
Acid Ball – Down, Down+Right, Right, P
High Headwhip – Down, Down+Left, Left, P
SSM – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P

Termination – Left, Left, Right, Right, P

Jet Kick (mid air) – Right, Right, K
Jet Back – Left, Left
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, K
SSM – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P

Termination – Right, Right, Right, P

Skip Backward – Left, Left
Barrel Roll (mid air) – Down, Down, P
Dash – Left, Right, P
Grenade – Left, Down+Left, Down, P
Sweep – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Left
SSM – Left, Down+Left, Down, Down+Right, Right, P

Termination – Left, Right, Left, Down+Left



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FADE TO BLACK



EIGHT LONG MONTHS AFTER WE FIRST BROUGHT YOU NEWS ABOUT *FADE TO BLACK*, DELPHINE'S SEQUEL TO THE EXCELLENT 16-BIT GAME *FLASHBACK* IS FINALLY READY. HERE WE GO.

Trouble is staring

Conrad B Hart right in the eyes. The year

is 2190 and he's been captured by an evil race of aliens known as Morphs. Against all directives of the Geneva Convention, Conrad's been woken up from hypersleep and flung into prison. Thankfully, he's not alone. A rebel faction known as the Mandragore free Conrad from the clutches of the aliens and enlist his help to thwart their plans to colonise the Earth. These aliens, able to change shape at will, aren't always what they seem. Are you up to the challenge?

With a classic B-Movie storyline, *Fade to Black* is perhaps one of the few PlayStation games that has a 'real' plot. Plots are usually supplementary to many games, but with *F2B*, the story adds to the drama of the whole thing. And drama this game certainly has, in spades! It'll have you sheepishly creeping around

corners, engaging in fire, solving puzzles, working out who you friends or foes are, and even falling in love... perhaps.

THE ADVENTURE GAME

Fade to Black's story has been very cleverly engineered to allow you as much freedom as you'd like in your actions. There are of course objectives to accomplish on your missions to help the resistance, but how you achieve them is up to you. And as you'd like to expect, there are different endings depending on what decisions you make throughout the game. This is good.

Another very positive aspect about this game is the intelligent manner in which the puzzles have been constructed. Some are straightforward, such as standing on pressure on pads to

disable force fields, and some are hard, requiring objects or a chain of events to occur beforehand to succeed. Often there are many ways of achieving the same goal, all with varying degrees of success,

but importantly, they are logical, and it is rewarding to find that your actions have the desired effects. This depth of gameplay is pleasingly high.

With any adventure game like this, saving your position is important to be able to

progress steadily. Thankfully, that clever Delphine lot have devised a way to save to four 'virtual' slots as you go along. Because of this, it's a lot easier to get

through a level to a vital password stage. Those with memory cards can of course save games as normal too, but this feature shows what kind of thought has gone into making sure that all players get the maximum enjoyment from the game. Nice one Delphine.

ONE FOR THE CAMERA

One of the most striking things about this game is the graphics. When *F2B* first came out on the PC, many raved on about the smart

"There is very little to fault *F2B* for playability."

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Customer support: 01753 546465
Price: £44.99
Release date: 28th June '96



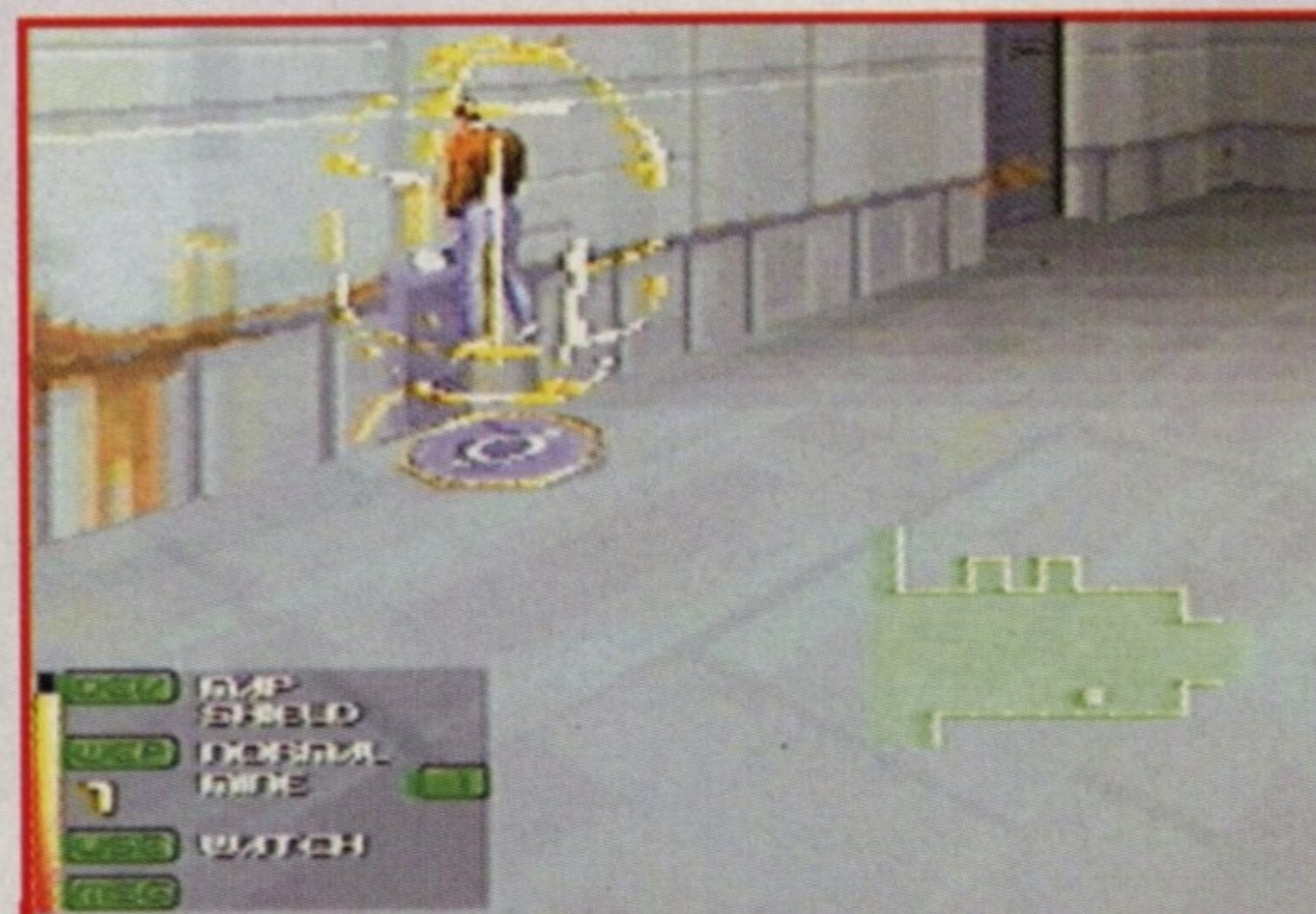
[ABOVE] Some clever manoeuvring is required to avoid attack from lasers and guns, as well as other foes. Motion capture makes the movements incredibly lifelike.



[ABOVE] Lockers contain all manner of goodies, like this recharger that'll restore your energy stores. Very handy.

ROOM WITH A VIEW...

THE CAMERA SYSTEM EMPLOYED BY *FADE TO BLACK* IS THE MOST INNOVATIVELY DEvised VIEWING METHOD OF ANY 3-D GAME. THE CAMERA HAS ONE OF FOUR BASIC POSITIONS, RANGING FROM LONG SHOTS TO CLOSE-UPS. WHAT'S ALSO VERY SMART IS HOW THE CAMERA PANS, ZOOMS, AND SCROLLS AROUND CONRAD TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO SEE IS VISIBLE, GIVING YOU TIME TO REACT.



[ONE] The long distance view is static, and allows you to look around clearly whilst accessing lockers and terminals or replenishing your shield at this energy charging station.



[Two] Whilst in motion, the camera follows you from a fairly distant angle, ensuring that enough of the scene is visible that you have a clear view of anything ahead.



[THREE] As you slow down and stop, the camera zooms in to give you a more detailed view of what's directly in front of you. This is handy for accessing terminals, for example.



[FOUR] Finally, as soon as you draw your gun, the camera gives you an almost-first-person perspective, allowing you to aim quicker and more precisely for shoot-outs.

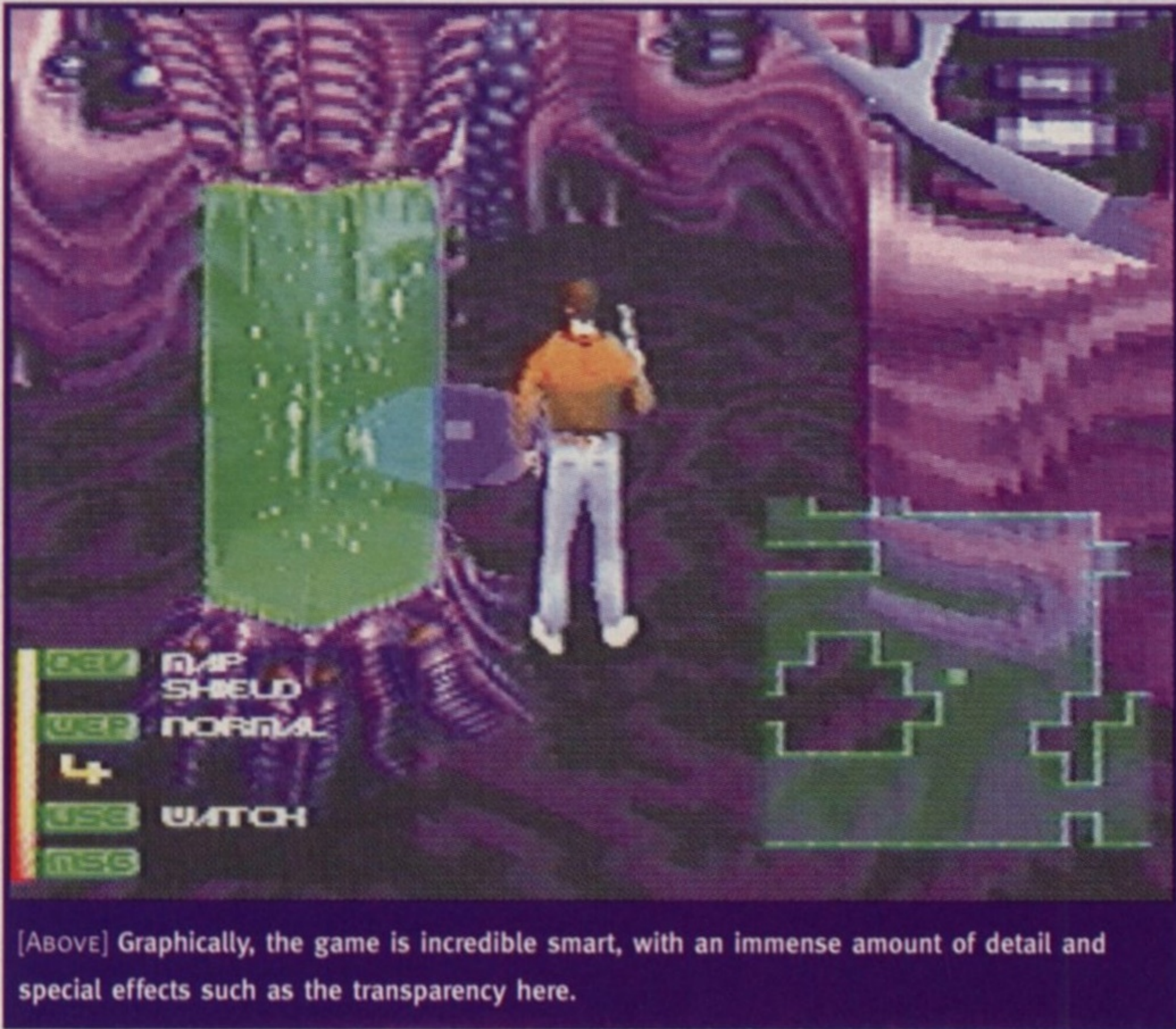
'virtual camera' viewing system. game employed. Thankfully, the conversion onto the PlayStation is similarly innovative, if not better, with higher level of detail, texture-mapping and above all, speed of motion. Perhaps the most striking aspect of this is the amount of data being thrown around, especially when you consider how big the levels are and that each loads into the 2Mb of RAM in one go, rather than in segments a la *Resident Evil*.

The only glitches you see are the strange perspective effects when you're close to objects, due to large textures on structures with relatively low polygon counts.

Despite this anomaly, all the graphics are nevertheless superb, and are stylised to perfection, with a whole range of different environments as you progress through the game. Conrad, like all the other characters, aliens and objects in the game is composed of smartly texture-mapped 3-D objects, rather than just rotating 2-D objects, and the added advantage of the characters being motion-captured certainly adds to the realism.



[ABOVE] Conrad's body contorts as he takes a blow from one of the alien's homing missile. Ouch. Painful.



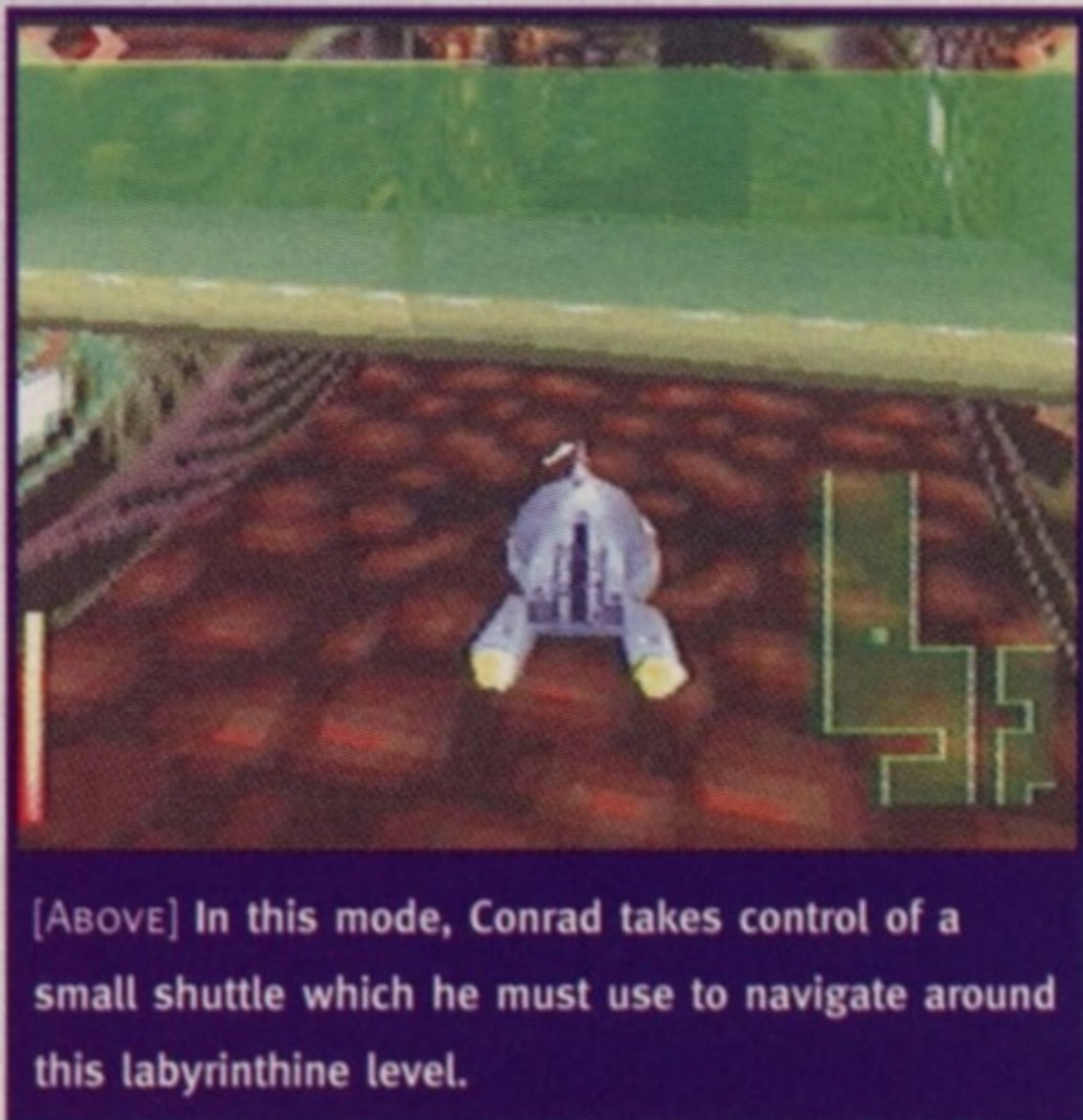
[ABOVE] Graphically, the game is incredible smart, with an immense amount of detail and special effects such as the transparency here.



BLACK DANUBE

Generally, the game's sounds are above average but nothing special, however the natural tension is complemented superbly by smart B-Movie-esque 'danger music' that rears up whenever Conrad gets himself into sticky situations.

These fight sequences are also supplanted by a radar-like target sight that pops up in the centre of the screen to indicate where any assailants are attacking from. As soon as the orchestra



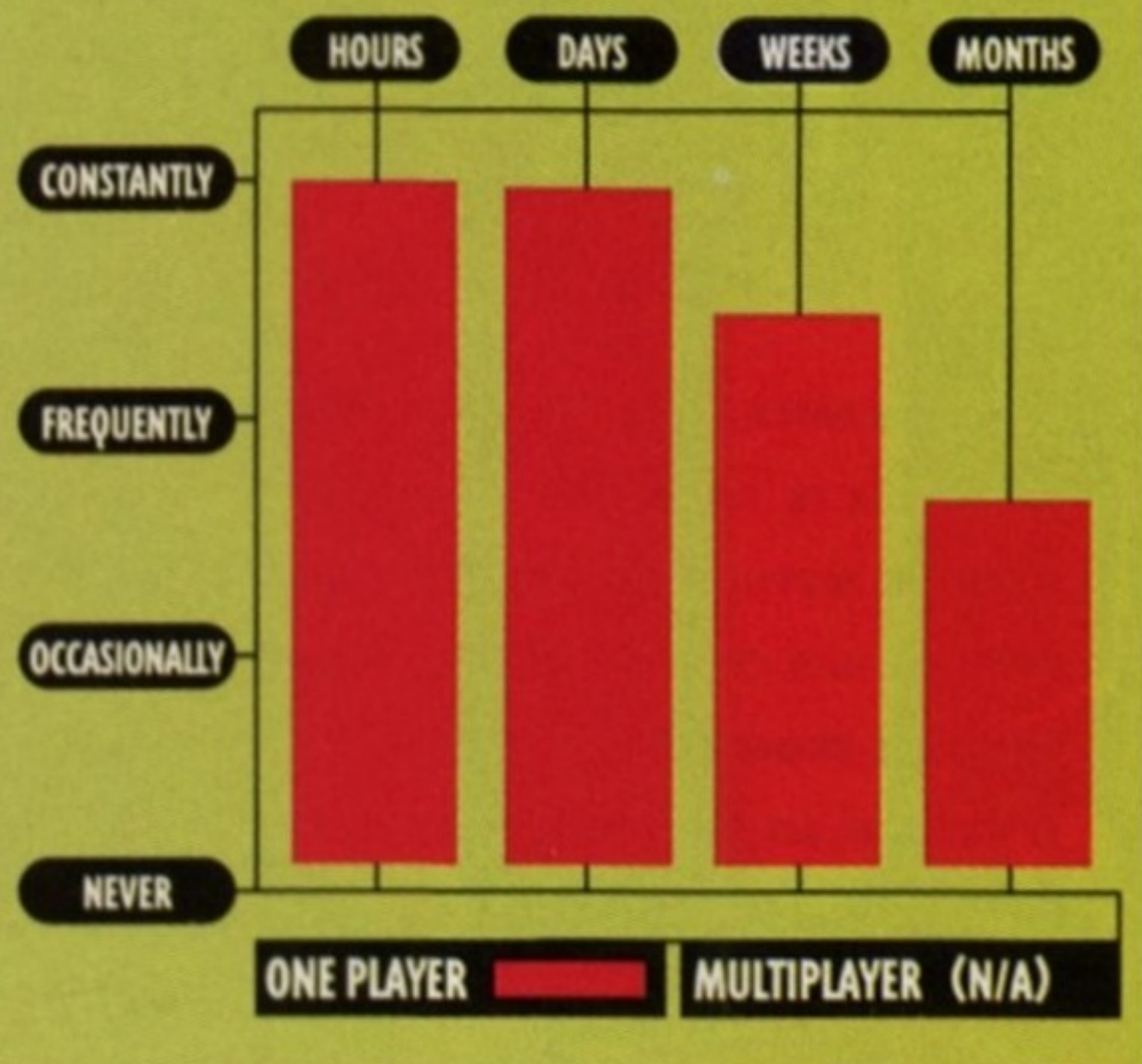
[ABOVE] In this mode, Conrad takes control of a small shuttle which he must use to navigate around this labyrinthine level.

flares up you know you've a shoot-out on your hands. The only criticism of the game whilst in this shoot-out mode is Conrad's sluggish movement. This is actually the way the game has been designed – Conrad stands akimbo with his gun out and cannot shift with any great speed when aiming in first person mode – you have put away your gun to run.

Apart from this annoying feature, there is very little to fault *F2B* for playability. With three difficulty levels, and set over 13 massive levels with bonus rooms, the game will certainly take a while to

“a superbly implemented, innovative game...”

LONG TERM PLAY...



complete. However, despite the excellent storyline and taut drama, *Resident Evil* just pips it at the post for blood-curdling tension. Nevertheless *F2B* is a very innovative and superbly implemented game, and if you like the idea of a properly animated 3-D romp, as opposed to the static backdrops of *Resident Evil*, then *Fade to Black* is the perfect alternative.



[ABOVE] This is the starting position on one of the later levels. I'm stood in front of a motion-sensitive droid. One move and...%#@#!



LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
INNOVATION	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 90%

Great sci-fi gameplay, without the gore

ALTERNATIVELY:
RESIDENT EVIL (95%)
ALONE IN THE DARK (77%)

The current weapon is indicated here. The weapons are all different cartridges for his gun and are picked up along the way. However, there is a fine balance between their power, speed and reloading time. Also, unlike the normal cartridges, advanced firepower is in limited supply. Grenades and mines are also indicated here.

Messages are displayed in text as well as voice if you turn the caption option on from the main menu. Sometimes it can be handy to be able to re-read things for yourself, rather than just listening to the albeit crystal clear speech.

This radar-like target indicates where any assailants are, if in the vicinity. Commonly, there can be many foes in the same room, and this is very useful for turning quickly, helping you to defeat them.

This indicates what facilities you have available at the present time. In your inventory you can carry several utility devices, but can only use two at a time. One of course will be your shield. The other in this case is the map, but can be anything from an info scanner to a camouflage module and even an anti-disintegration module. These all drain energy at different rates, and must be used prudently.

This graph shows the percentage of energy left. It is rated in PUs (power units) and various tools drain your total energy. Importantly, it also powers your shield. Luckily there are charging stations around the place, but also ensure you look for bonus power-ups which increase your total energy capacity.

Various messages from the resistance group or even handy hints are indicated here whenever you pick them up. Very useful.

This indicates what other devices are currently in-use. In this case it's just Conrad's watch, but can vary to various tools you pick up along the way.

At the moment this section of the screen is showing a map, but this can change into an information scanner which tells you things like the strength of enemy fire when aiming in combat-mode.



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urban strike	17	8	12
vector man	28	17	21
virtua racing	32	20	24
vr troopers	27	15	21
world of illusion	12	6	8
wwf arcade	30	20	24
wwf royal rumble	20	10	15
wwf raw	22	12	17
zero tolerance	15	7	11
zombies	15	7	11

All new releases held in stock for Megadrive, Snes, Saturn+, PlayStation - phone for prices. You can trade your games for new or used games. Please ensure that all games have box + instructions and are PAL copies.

To sell games

If you are selling games, simply send them to us with your name, address and phone number and a list of all the cartridges with the buy back prices you are selling at. If you are unsure of the value then call.

To buy or trade games

If you are buying or trading against games, please call for availability before sending cheques.

List the games you are trading along with their trade-in prices as well as the games you are purchasing with their prices. Do not forget to add carriage (see below).

Saturn

	i	ii	iii
bug	25	15	18
clockwork knight	10	5	7
clockwork knight 2	28	17	21
cyber speedway	23	10	15
daytona usa	20	10	13
digital pinball	25	15	18
f1	30	20	24
fifa	28	17	21
firestorm	30	20	24
galaxy fight	28	17	21
golden axe	28	17	21
hang on	28	17	21
hi octane	27	15	21
horde	28	17	21
international victory goal	10	5	7
johnny bazookatone	28	17	21
mansion of hidden souls	25	13	18
mortal kombat 2	30	20	24
myst	25	15	18
mysteria	30	20	24
nba jam	25	15	18
nhl hockey	28	17	22
off world interceptor	27	15	21
panzer dragoon	20	10	15
parodius	30	20	23
pebble beach golf	25	15	18
rayman	30	20	24
real pinball	27	15	21
robotica	27	15	21
sega rally	20	20	24
shell shocked	30	20	24
shinobi x	28	17	21
sim city 2000	30	20	24
street fighter anim	22	10	15
theme park	28	17	21
toshinden	30	20	24
v. boxing	30	20	24
valores golf	28	17	21
victory boxing	30	20	24
virtua cop	30	20	24
virtua cop + gun	40	25	30

virtua fighter	10	5	7
virtua fighter 2	30	20	23
virtua hydride	26	15	18
virtua racing	23	12	15
v.f. remix	20	10	15
wing arms	30	20	24
wipeout	30	20	24
world series baseball	30	20	24
worms	28	17	22
xmen	32	20	25

Snes

	i	ii	iii
animaniacs	20	10	15
batman forever	25	15	18
biker mice from mars	20	10	15
blackhawk	20	10	15
bomberman 2	18	9	13
bomberman 3	30	18	24
clayfighter 2	25	15	18
desert fighter	16	7	11
desert strike	16	7	11
donkey kong	25	13	18
donkey kong 2	30	20	24
doom	27	15	21
dragon	20	10	15
earthworm jim	25	15	18
earthworm jim 2	30	18	24
empire strikes back	23	12	17
fifa '96	30	20	24
ghoul patrol	15	7	11
give 'n' go	27	15	21
int. s. s. deluxe	30	20	23
judge dredd	25	15	18
jungle book	25	15	18
jungle strike	27	16	21
killer instinct	25	15	18
lemmings 2	20	10	15
lion king	25	15	18
mario kart	22	12	15
mario paint	23	13	18
maximum carnage	20	10	15
mega man x	17	8	12
mickey mania	18	9	13
mirco machines	20	10	15
mortal kombat 2	17	8	12
mortal kombat 3	30	20	24
nba jam tour	25	15	18
pga golf	20	10	15
pitfall	18	9	13
pocky & rocky 2	20	10	15
powerdrive	22	12	15
power rangers	22	12	17
primal rage	25	14	18
putty squad	22	12	15
return of the jedi	25	15	18
rise of the robots	12	6	8
rock & roll racing	24	14	19
secret of mana	23	12	17
sen. soccer ltd	22	12	17
shadowrun	22	12	17
smash tennis	15	7	10
street racer	17	8	12
striker	12	6	8
sunset riders	18	9	14
syndicate	20	10	14
t2 arcade	18	9	14
theme park	28	16	22
turtles tourn fighters	17	8	12
unirally	17	8	12
wolfenstein	20	10	15
wwf arcade	30	20	24
wwf royal rumble	20	10	15
yoshis island	30	20	24
zombies	18	9	13
zoop	23	13	17

PlayStation

	i	ii	iii
actua soccer	30	20	24
agile warrior	28	17	21
air combat	28	17	20
alien trilogy	30	20	24
alone in the dark	28	17	21
assault rigs	28	17	20
cyber speedway	20	10	13
cybersled	12	5	8
d	30	20	24
defcon 5	27	15	20
descent	30	20	24
destruction derby	24	13	18
discworld	28	17	20
doom	28	17	21
extreme games	28	17	21
extreme pinball	28	17	21
fifa	22	10	15
firestorm	30	18	22
goal storm	26	15	20
hi octane	28	17	21
johnny bazookatone	26	15	18
jumping flash	26	15	20
jupiter strike	28	17	20
kileak the blood	17	8	12
krazy ivan	28	17	21
lemmings 3d	27	15	20
loaded	25	13	18
lone soldier	20	10	15
magic carpet	30	20	24
nba in the zone	30	20	24
nba jam	26	15	20
need for speed	30	20	24
novastorm	25	15	18
off world interceptor	28	17	21
parodius	28	17	21
pga '96	30	20	22
philosoma	30	20	24
power serve	28	17	21
psychic detective	30	20	22
raiden	26	15	20
rapid reload	26	15	20
rayman	27	15	20
revolution x	30	20	24
ridge racer	22	10	15
road rash	30	20	24
shell shocked	30	20	24
shockwave assault	28	17	21
starblade alpha	28	17	21
striker	17	7	12
street fighter	20	10	13
tekken	30	15	20
theme park	30	20	24
toshinden	20	10	15
total eclipse	26	15	20
total nba	30	20	24
twisted metal	30	20	24
warhawk	30	20	21
wing commander	32	20	25
wipeout	25	15	18
world cup golf	28	17	21
worms	28	17	21
wwf	28	17	21
xcom	28	17	21
zero divide	28	17	21
zork	30	20	24

We also stock used games for Cdi, MegaCD, CD32 and Jaguar

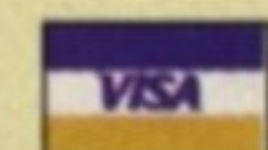
Column i If you wish to buy a used game from us, this is the price you will pay.

Column ii If you are selling a game for cash, this is the amount you will receive from us.

Column iii If you are trading your game against another (new or used), this is the amount which your game is worth off the price.

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58 James St, Bradford BD1 3PZ Tel: 01274 741040

Please include a handling charge of £1.50 for the first game and 50p per game thereafter.
Allow 14 days for delivery. We strongly advise you to use registered or recorded delivery as we cannot accept liability for games lost in the post. All our games are guaranteed to be in good working order. Any faulty games sold to us will be returned at your expense. All prices correct at time of going to press and are subject to change without prior notice. We reserve the right to refuse any sale/purchase.

Callers welcome at our stores at Kirkgate, Leeds, 2a Gillygate, York and James Street, Bradford

SKILLS, THRILLS 'N' SHOW- STOPPERS

AN OLYMPIC EXTRAVAGANZA IS UPON US, SO LET US TAKE TIME OUT TO MARVEL THE HIGHLIGHTS AND LOW POINTS OF US GOLD'S SUPERFLUOUS AND BLATANT LICENCE FOR THE SAKE OF LICENSING.

[GOOD GOALS]



[DIRTY TACKLES]



[JUBILATIONS]



OLYMPIC SOCCER

THE FOOTBALL GAMES KEEP ON COMING, EACH CLAIMING TO BE THE KING, SO WHAT'S A PUNTER SUPPOSED TO DO? READ PLAY AND BE WARY OF OLYMPIC-SIZED SOCCER LICENCES.

Some might say

that imitation is like, flattery, and if this is the case, the

developers of *Sensible Soccer* and *Actua Soccer* must be feeling pretty damn smug with themselves because yet another game has appeared which could be mistaken for having been moulded from the two pioneering formulas. Welcome to *Actua Olympic Sensible Soccer* then...

Of course, we know Silicon Dreams has been working on *Olympic Soccer* for two years and so couldn't possibly have copied *Actua*. And there can be only one *Sensible Soccer* (although not, it would seem, on the PlayStation). The point is, when you arrive later than one of the best (not to mention *adidas Power Soccer*) and demand £40 for your services, you have to offer more than your predecessors, and well, this one... doesn't.

FOOTBALL CRAAAZY!!

What you've got here is an okay international-style soccer affair with loadsa Olympic jazz tagged onto the end. Apart from that, there are all the usual bits on offer: the various game modes (Arcade, Exhibition, Tournament and Olympic Tournament), a plethora of

camera angles (*Actua*, *FIFA*, *Power* et al), as well as sports commenorator with verbal diarrhoea. In this case, maybe because the biggest names were already signed, Alan Green from Radio Five Live. Yippee.

"The programmers probably think Ajax is something you clean with"

He seems to know his stuff and offers some amusing anecdotes once in a while but he's not Bazza Davies is he?

FOOTBALL MAAAAD!!

Once you're underway and into the proper matches, the similarities to past great footy

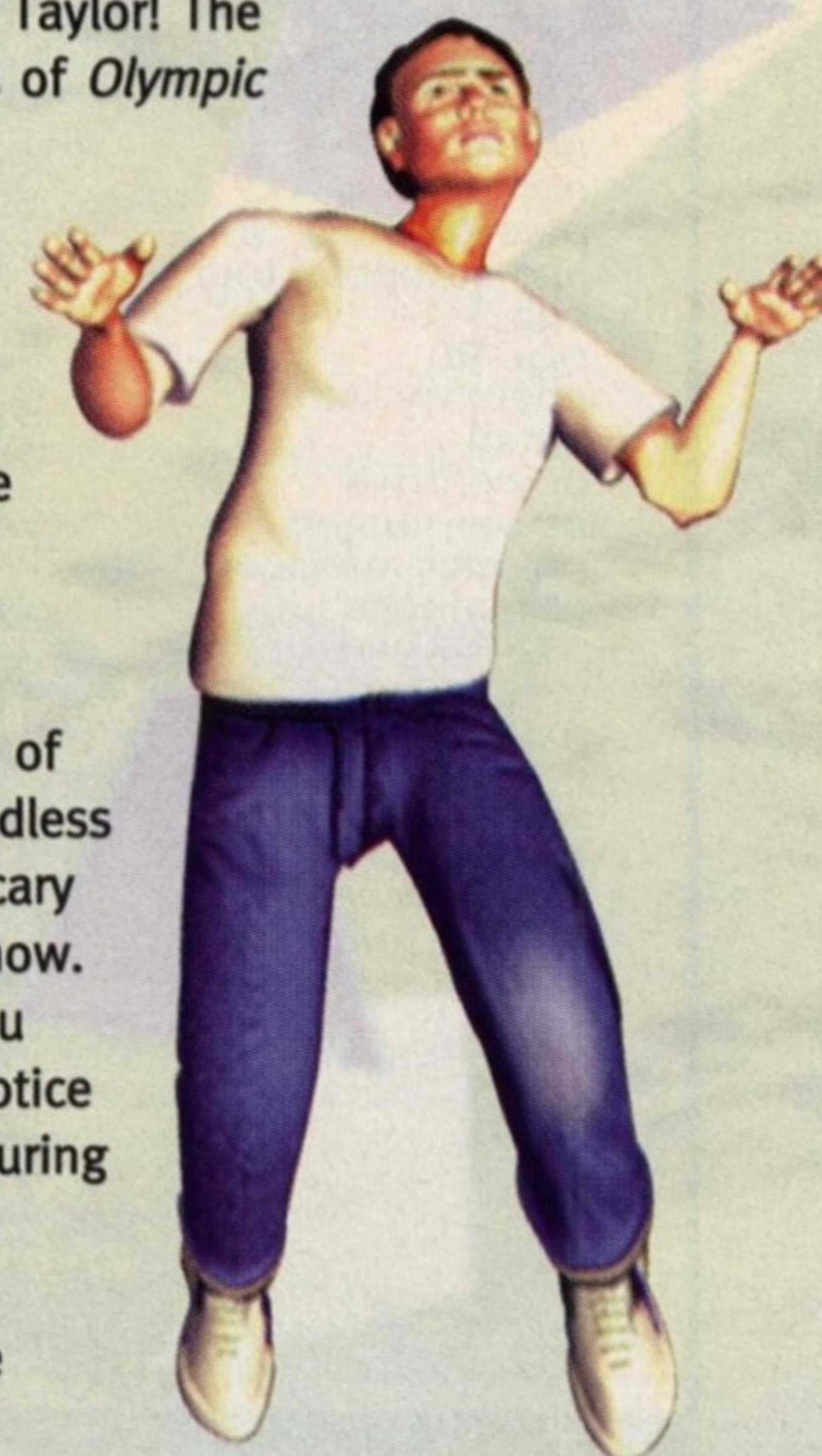
games is instantly apparent. *OS* emulates the speed and ferocity of the mighty 16-bit and PC game *Sensible Soccer* whilst keeping the visuals roughly on a par with recent greats.

However, it's dawned on this reviewer that fantastic visuals coupled with a frantic pace don't necessarily mix. This is mainly because the players and pitch become one huge speed blur as the ball is constantly booted from one end to the other, with little scope for the player to, say, do the video game equivalent of

putting his foot on the ball, and applying the precision and skill normally required to make a game of this nature a great one.

What you really want is a mixture of attention and realistic pace which allows you to think and carefully plan each attack. Rather than having to just hoof the ball upfield and hope for the best. Hey, those tactics went out with Graham Taylor! The programmers of *Olympic Soccer* probably think that Ajax is something you clean the kitchen with.

The player sprites are a congregation of faceless, handless beings – a scary prospect I know. To be fair you only really notice this oddity during the zoom-ins because the players move



PLAY+ INFORMATION

Publisher: US Gold
Customer support: 0121 356 0831
Price: £39.99
Release date: June



MUTIPLE PLAYERS MEMORY CARD

[INCREDIBLE SKILLS]



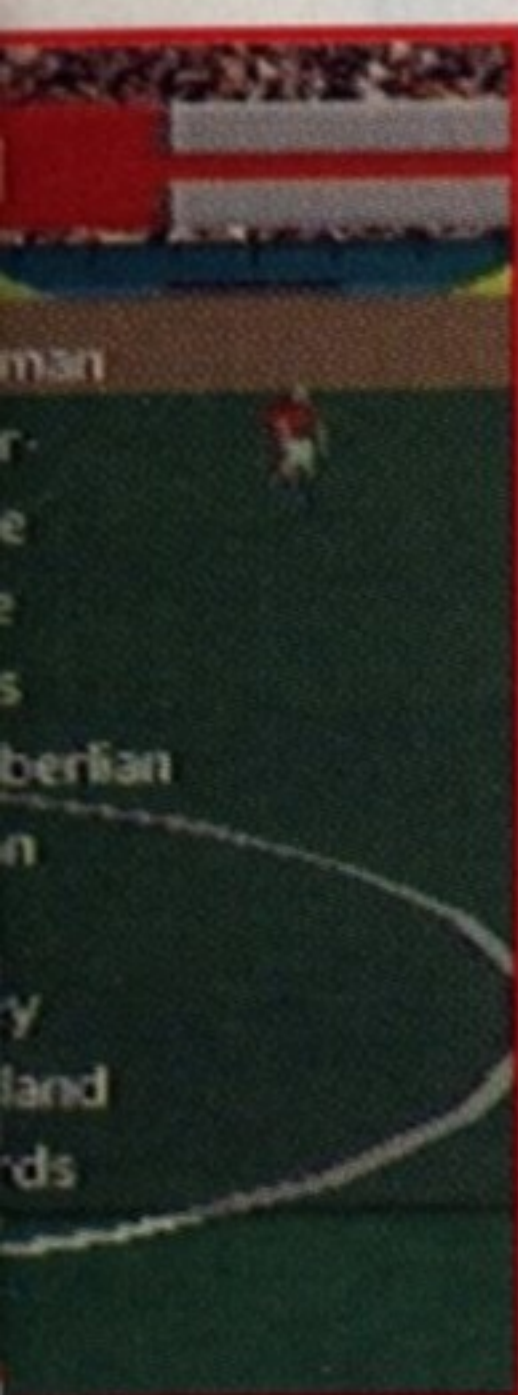
[HIGH STANDINGS]

Tables										
	RUS	2	1	0	1	-1	3			
	AUS	2	0	0	2	-2	0			
Group 2										
	P	W	D	L	G	P				
	ENG	2	1	1	0	2	4			
	POR	2	1	1	0	1	4			
	NOR	2	0	1	1	-1	1			
	ISR	2	0	1	1	-2	1			
Group 3										
	P	W	D	L	G	P				
	POL	2	2	0	0	2	6			

[ALIEN REFS]



[BAD DECISIONS]



[ABOVE] He dives to rattle-in a beauty.



[ABOVE] When attacking goal from a diagonal position, always apply plenty of curl on the ball for near perfect results every time.



realistically enough and have a decent array of skills at their disposal, including overhead kicks, sprints, and headers. The control system is actually very well thought out and this makes for some stunningly constructed goals if you've got the skill and timing to pull them off... I, unfortunately didn't, but instead gasped in awe at the computer's screamers on quite a few occasions!

Afterschool is important here, although you'd be forgiven for thinking each OS stadium suffers from monsoon-strength winds, such is the degree of movement you can put on the ball.

WISE MEN SAY

This review probably sounds like a proper slagging, but *Olympic Soccer* isn't actually half bad. Granted, it has its fair share of bad points, but it does actually play a decent, enjoyable game of football. Once you get

the hang of the controls you can piece some decent moves together – especially nifty little one-two passes to cut through the enemy defences. Okay, it takes too bloody long to master the said controls and the game doesn't possess any of the gimmicky traits of *Power Soccer*, or even the drop-dead gorgeous visuals of *Actua*, but, if you like things fast, simple, and frippery-free you could certainly do worse than OS. If you want anything more than that, forget it.



[ABOVE] Unfortunately, penalties are far too easy.



[ABOVE] Euro '96 perhaps (apart from the Brazilian)?



LOOKS	●●●●●●●●○○○
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●○○○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●○○○
VALUE	●●●●●●●●○○○
LICENCE	●●●●●●●●○○○

PLAYED **84%**

Five rings on my shirt? Possibly.

ALTERNATIVELY:

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER (95%)
ACTUA SOCCER (94%)

IT'S ALL JUST AN ACT

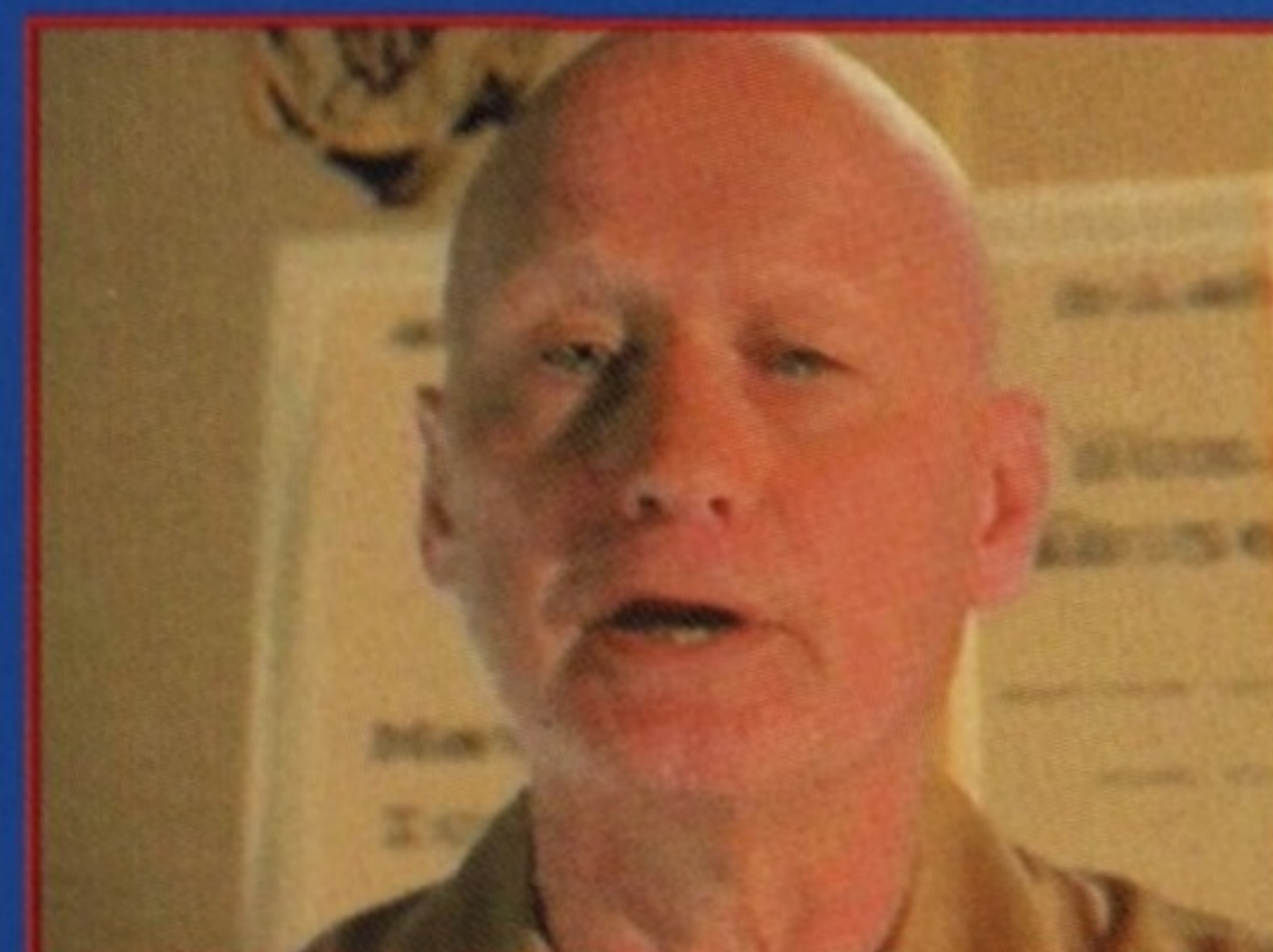
THE 'INTERACTIVE MOVIE' FEEL EXTENDS TO USING REAL ACTORS TO RECREATE ELEMENTS FROM THE FILM FOR USE IN THE GAME. TO ADD AN EXTRA AIR OF AUTHENTICITY, EVEN JAMES TOLKAN, THE ORIGINAL ACTOR FROM THE FILM TOP GUN, HAS BEEN RECRUITED TO REPRIS HIS ROLE AS HONDO. HERE ARE A FEW SNAPSHOTS OF THE CAST.



RAVEN (CELIA SHUMAN). ONE OF YOUR WING-MEN. COOL, CALM AND COLLECTED, SHE DOESN'T MIND HAVING HER PHOTO TAKEN BUT HAS IMMENSE HAIR.



AMANDA MOORE (JULIE CARMEN). SHE'S THE REPORTER THAT BRINGS YOU NEWS, AND LIVES IN FRONT OF A CAMERA. A BIT OF ROMANCE PERHAPS?



HONDO (JAMES TOLKAN). YOUR OVERBEARING COMMANDING OFFICER. HE DISLIKES PHOTOGRAPHS AND THINKS THEY'RE NAMBY PAMBY.

TOP GUN

THE THEME FROM THE TOP MOVIE WAS TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY, WHICH SOUNDS PROMISING ENOUGH. LET'S SEE WHETHER MICROPROSE HAS CHOKED WHEN IT COMES TO THE PLAYSTATION VERSION.

FIRE AT WILL

The best way

to describe *Top Gun* is as an airborne arcade shoot-'em-up. This implies many things, not least that the game is most definitely not a simulation. It's a game where all you have to do is fight in flight.

Based upon the eponymous movie, you assume the role of Maverick, a hot-shot pilot eager to prove himself in the wake of his father's death. The story follows you through flight school, then training missions to get you up to speed in your airborne abilities, and finally on to 'real' missions in Cuba, Korea and Libya, where hero stuff like honour and freedom are on the line.

As the game is arcadey in style, there is very little to learn as far as controlling your sky-bird is concerned. This is great, especially for the fact that on a PlayStation joypad, you have little scope for any kind of advanced control such as you would on a PC. Bloody good if you ask me, all them keys to learn... anyway, as a result, the game has a very accessible learning curve.

However, part of the problem with this

'simplicity' is the lack of depth in the actual missions. It's all very well flying around shooting down as much as you can, but after a while, the gameplay feels quite shallow. Some of the missions involve ground targets, and others have you escorting bombers for example, but despite these variations in theme, each of the 40-odd missions is limited to the same routine of plain fight-in-flight,

with certain 'kills' required as objectives.

Visually, the game is also somewhat lacking in... finesse. Speed-wise, the display is adequate but not special. Also, the 'illusion' of speed you should get whilst flying is not quite up to scratch. It's not too bad, but nevertheless feels like it could have done with optimisation. The ground detail is adequate, at least the texture-maps are,

"Visually, the game is lacking in... finesse."



[ABOVE] This time the mission involves escorting this bomber through a war-zone, eliminating unfriendly fire.



[ABOVE] Clever manoeuvring involves learning the handling of your plane, and then flying recklessly like a kamikaze!

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: MicroProse
Customer support: 01454 893893
Price: TBA
Release date: July '96





NEWSCASTER (BLOKE WITH TIE). THE NEWSCASTER WAS GLAD HIS CHOICE OF TIE GOT HIM THIS BIT-PART. HE ALSO HAS NOTHING ON UNDER THE DESK

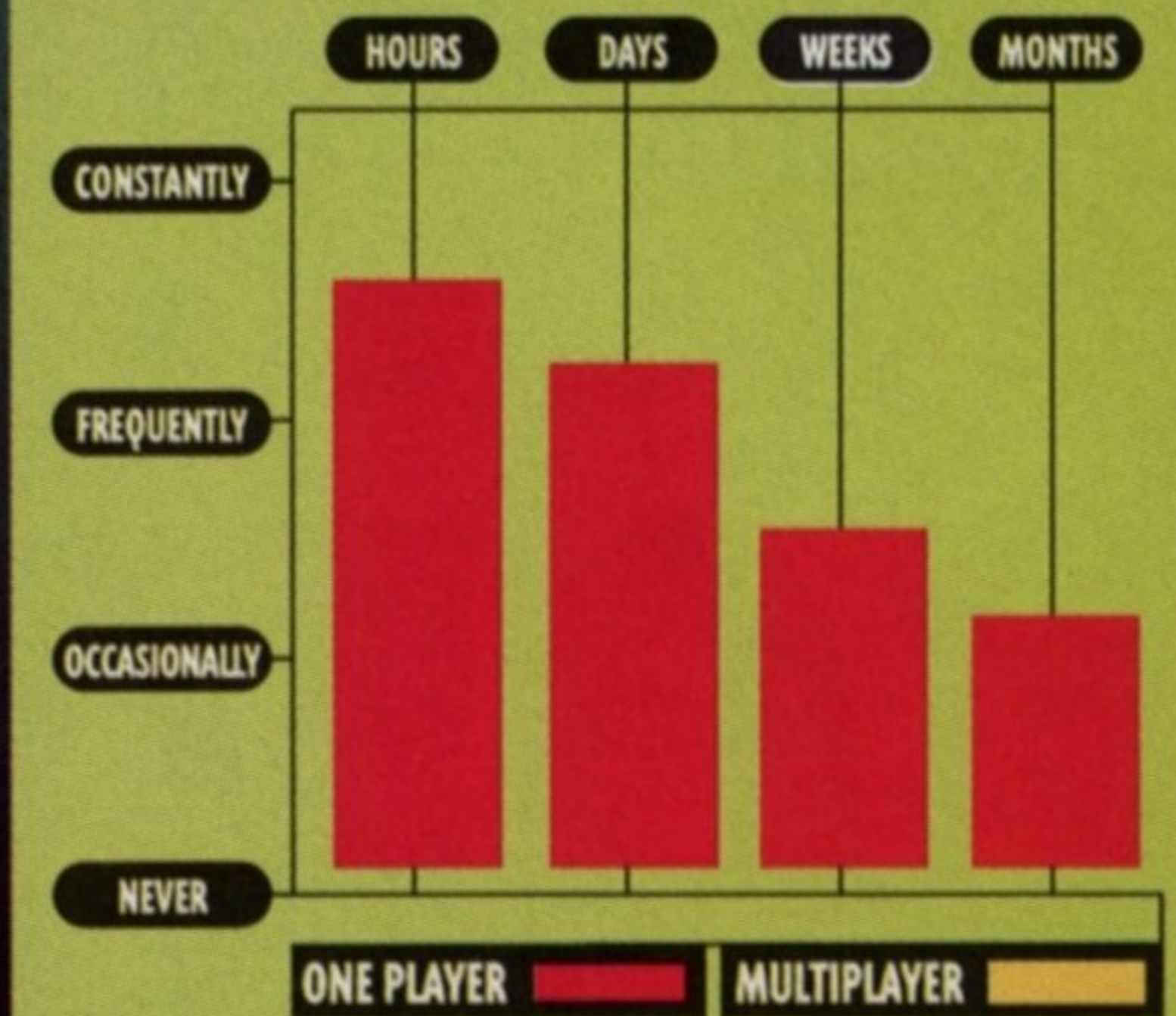


MERLIN (GEORGE CASTILLO). MERLIN IS YOUR RIO, AND ABSOLUTELY LOVES POSING FOR CAMERAS. MERLIN WANTS TO BE AN ACTOR AND HE'S ALWAYS SMIRKING.



STINGER (JAMISON JONES). THE GAME'S VERSION OF 'ICE MAN'. HE LIKES THE CAMERA, BUT MERLIN'S TRYING TO GET INTO HIS FRAME.

LONG TERM PLAY...



[ABOVE] Watch out for objects like pylons when flying low level missions.



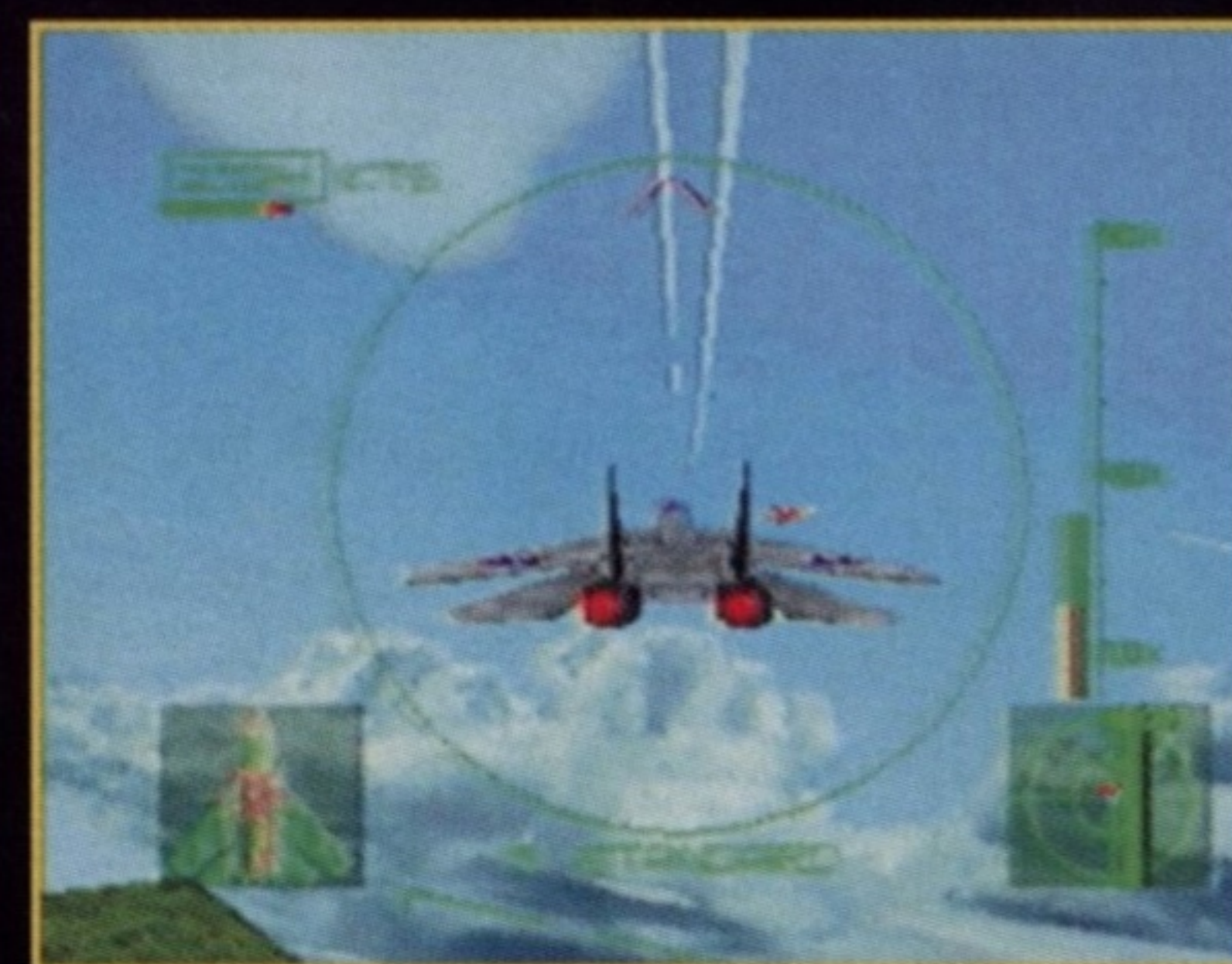
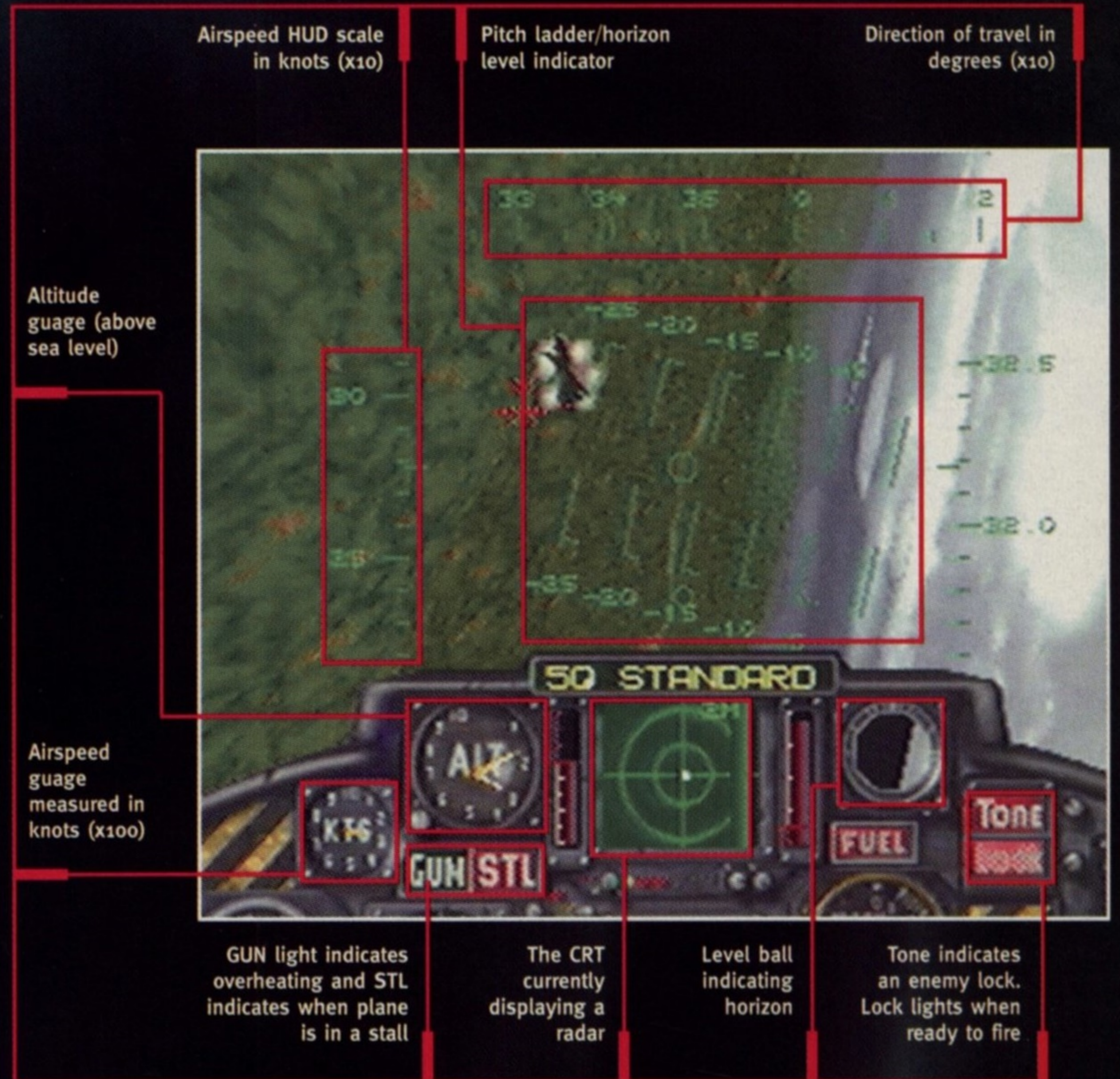
[ABOVE] How far away is that ground? Can you tell?

but the actual number of ground targets and other 'scenery' is sparse. Certainly the biggest criticism, and an important one at that, is the difficulty to judge your distance from the ground. As you fly past mountains and manoeuvre for ground targets, it's a little too easy to crash. This isn't helped by the slow illusion of speed, even at low altitude when the ground should be streaming past you at phenomenal rates, especially in an F-14!

Thankfully, the sound department is much better equipped. Merlin, your RIO (Radar Intercept Officer), sits in your

plane with you and shouts out various warnings as you fly. Sometimes it can be hard to figure out what he says, with all the noise from explosions, but paying attention to him is vital. Other sound in the game is informative, and also must be listened for, with warning noises sounding constantly when under fire.

Top Gun is a decent enough game, but it lacks involvement, long term challenge, and a convincing flight model. *Gunship* is far better and it doesn't subject you to cheesy b-movie acting.



[ABOVE] The two white missiles are mine, and the flare on the left has just saved me from the red missile on the right.

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
LONGEVITY	●●●●●●●●●●

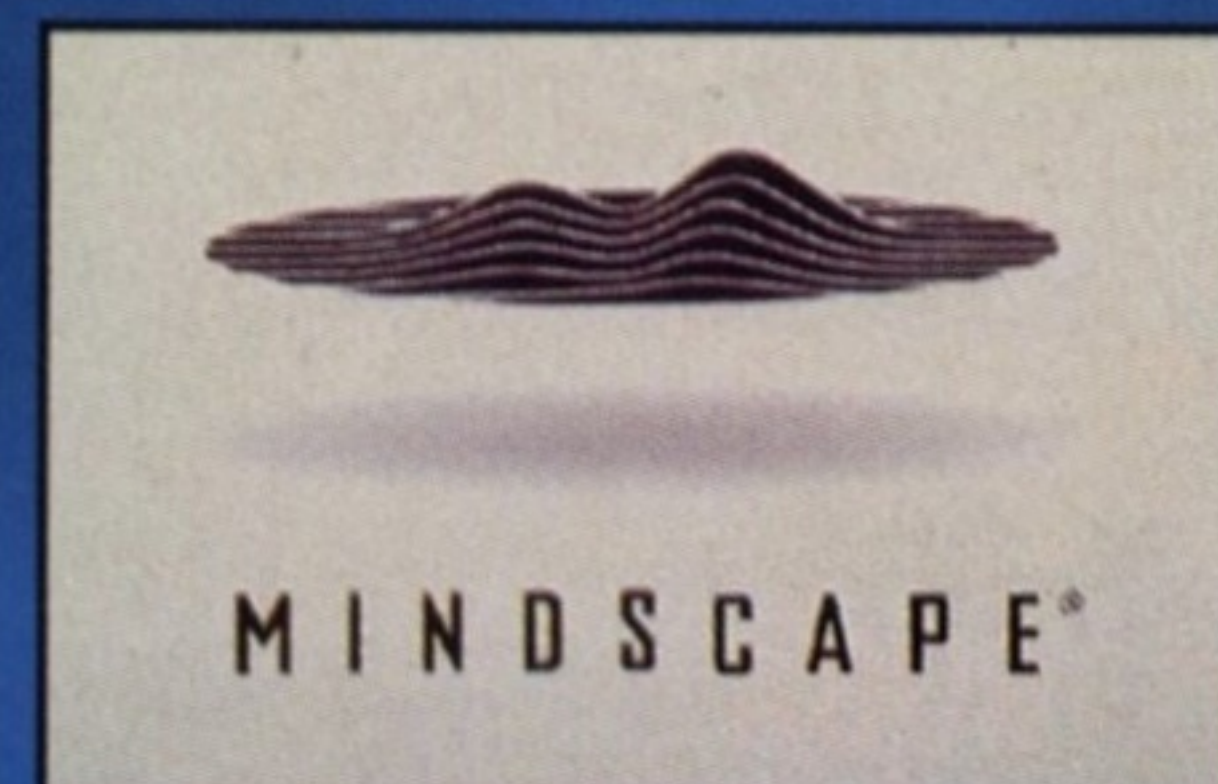
PLAYED 76%

Doesn't take your breath away

ALTERNATIVELY:

STARFIGHTER 3000 (85%)
AIR COMBAT (81%)

WIN REMOTE-CONTROLLED RACERS!



[BANDIT]



IT'S SUPERSONIC time again! Yup, to follow on from our mega Scalextric compo from last issue, we're giving away some incredibly smart all-terrain remote-control cars, courtesy of Mindscape and the *Supersonic Racers* boys. These mean racing machines ride like the wind and come ready prepared for action. All built to incredibly high standards, these tough trucks and boisterous buggys are guaranteed to annoy people's ankles. The first prize is the awesome Sledge Hammer, a monster truck with mammoth power. Second prize is the Rad 2 off-road racer that'll have you spinning dust bowls everywhere, and third prize is the Bandit, a bad little buggy designed to thrill. All come with oil-damped shock-absorbers, suspension, er, wheels...

TO WIN, JUST ANSWER THIS INCREDIBLY SIMPLE QUESTION...

[WHICH MEGA DRIVE GAME WERE THE SUPERSONIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM INVOLVED WITH BEFORE *SUPERSONIC RACERS*?]

- [a] Mini Machines 2
- [b] Micro Machines 2
- [c] Mega Machines 2

Simply write your answer on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope, together with your name and address and send it to:

I'M A CONTROL FREAK!

Play Magazine
Paragon House
St Peter's Road
Bournemouth, BH1 2JS

PLEASE NOTE: The editor's decision is final. No correspondence may be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or its suppliers Mindscape or Supersonic may not enter. Multiple entries will be used to mop spilt coffee and the entrant's name given to the Thai police. The closing date for the competition is Friday 19 July 1996. All winners will be notified in writing. A list of winners will be available in writing on request from Paragon Publishing at the above address. The sponsors reserve the right to supply a prize of equivalent value should the illustrated prize be no longer available. No cash alternatives. Nuff said.



[SLEDGE HAMMER]



[RAD 2]

KEEP THESE.

Throw the rest away.

DESCENT

Your body is redundant. Descent lets you fly, twist and shoot 360°. Now on Sony Playstation. May you rest in pieces.



FRANK THOMAS

BIG HURT BA

ACCLAIM'S ACCLAIMED MOTION CAPTURE TECHNOLOGY HAS MADE IT TO BASEBALL, BUT DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO THE GAMEPLAY?

Baseball is

probably America's biggest sport. Watched by millions throughout its long playing season. It's big in Japan too, so it comes as no great surprise that the sport has made its way to the PlayStation.

Acclaim's interactive effort drops you right into the heart of hardball heaven, with all the teams and characteristics of both the American and National major leagues. Fans of the game will revel in the ability to recreate play-offs between their favourites, and like PlayStation football games, *Big Hurt Baseball* also includes a complete run down of player statistics.

LET'S PLAY BALL!

There are various playing modes available in the game, from a single exhibition, through to the full season, which can be played against a computer or another player. Also included is an All-Star option, which allows you to play with a 'dream team' chosen from all the players in both leagues. There are two

different methods of actual play, Regulation, in which all the rules are followed as you'd expect, and the arcadey Quick Play, which has modifications such as only one 'strike' (instead of three), to speed the action up a bit.

In play, the gamer unfortunately doesn't have quite the same degree of control as with the menu options. Whilst batting, there's only a limited number of different swings to try and score with. Option one is a stun shot to drop the ball short (called 'bunting'), or you can always resort to a plain old slog. No chance then, to exchange accuracy for power in last-minute home run-needing situations,

"Fans of real baseball will love *Big Hurt*."

or to have one button assigned to trying to hit a fly ball to advance a runner around the bases. Ultimately, it can be argued that the pair offered are all you need to do every kind of shot, and the rest is down to timing. But, more often than not in *Big Hurt*, the gamer has only restricted control over the direction of his ball, and it ends up in unpredictable places, with tactical batting going out the window in favour of all-out power-slogs. There is a batting practice mode

to help things somewhat, but still, the level of control you can attain in the game is limited.

Pitching thankfully is much more precise. Each pitcher has three or four (out of eight throws) in his repertoire. These include fast-balls, curve-balls, screw-balls and splitters. The direction and speed is controllable using the D-Pad, and you can also dictate whether your team plays in-field or out-field, as well as being able to adjust your pitcher's position on

PLAY INFORMATION

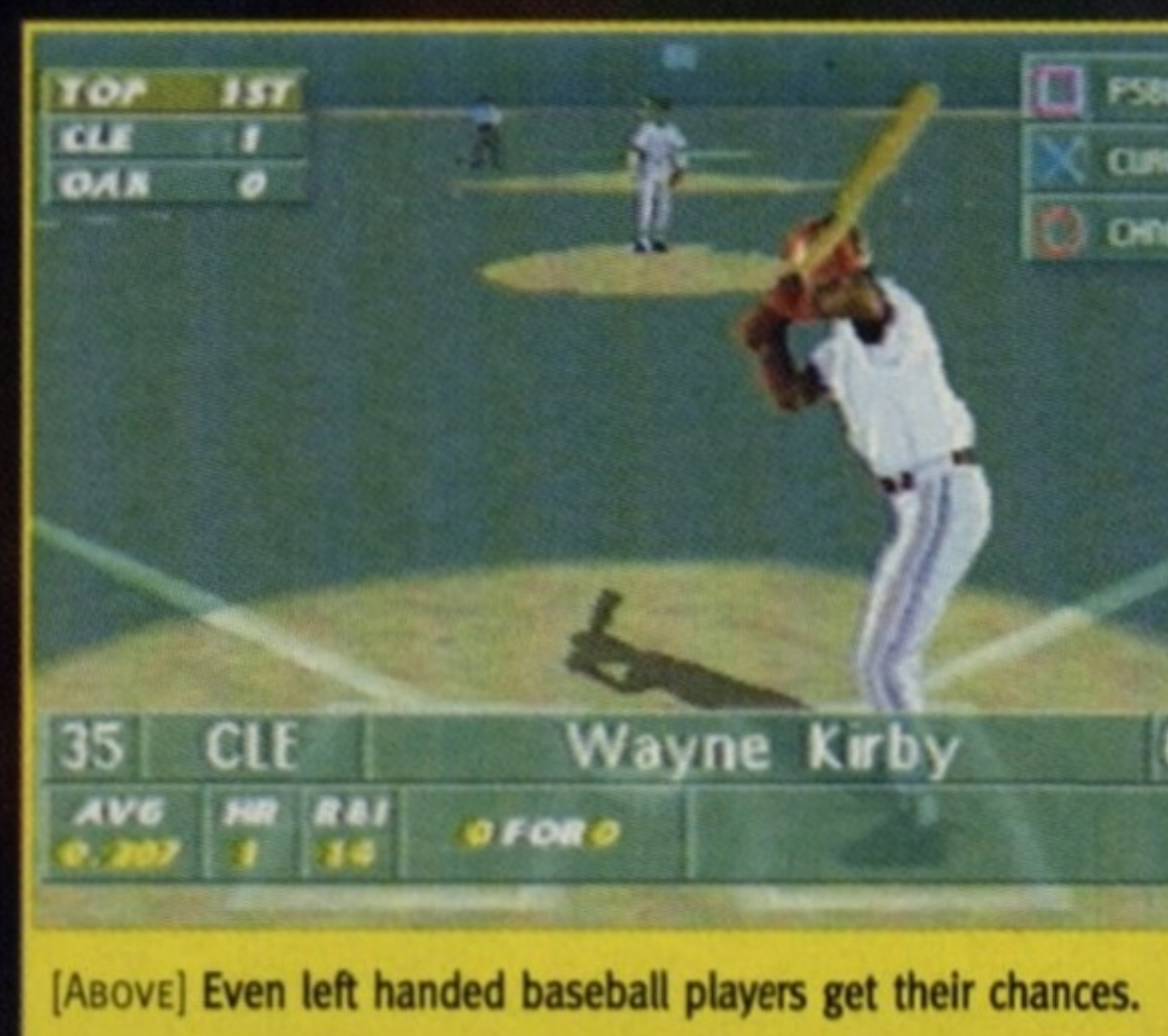
Publisher: Acclaim
Customer support: 0171 344 5000
Price: £39.99
Release date: June



MULTIPLE PLAYERS



MEMORY CARD



[ABOVE] Even left handed baseball players get their chances.



FRANK THOMAS... WHO?

JUST WHO IS THIS GUY THEY CALL BIG HURT? HERE'S ALL YOU'LL EVER NEED TO KNOW...

[FRANK EDWARD THOMAS]

NUMBER: 35
AGE 27
POSITION: FIRST BASEMAN
BATS: RIGHT
THROWS: RIGHT
HEIGHT: 6' 5"
WEIGHT: 257 LBS
BORN: MAY 27, 1968, COLUMBUS, GA.
RESIDES: BURR RIDGE, ILL.
FIRST PRO CONTRACT: CHICAGO WHITE SOX.
MAJOR LEAGUE SERVICE: FIVE YEARS, 10 DAYS.
CONTRACT STATUS: SIGNED THROUGH 1998 WITH OPTIONS FOR 1999 AND 2000.

[CAREER HIGHLIGHTS]

- SELECTED BY THE WHITE SOX IN THE FIRST ROUND (SEVENTH OVERALL) OF THE JUNE 1989 FREE-AGENT DRAFT.
- FROM 1991-95 HE PUT TOGETHER THE MOST IMPRESSIVE STRETCH IN BASEBALL HISTORY BY AVERAGING .323 WITH 35 HR AND 113 RBI IN HIS FIRST FIVE FULL MAJOR LEAGUE SEASONS. DURING THAT PERIOD HE BECAME THE FIRST PLAYER EVER TO HIT .300 OR BETTER WITH AT LEAST 20 HR, 100 RBI, 100 WALKS AND 100 RUNS SCORED IN FIVE CONSECUTIVE YEARS.
- OVER THE LAST FIVE SEASONS, THOMAS' .323 BA RANKS SECOND, HIS 175 HR RANK SECOND AND HIS 564 RBI LEADS ALL MAJOR LEAGUE PLAYERS IN THAT SPAN. VOTED THE AL'S MOST VALUABLE PLAYER IN 1993 AND 1994, BECOMING JUST THE 11TH PLAYER EVER TO WIN AN MVP AWARD IN CONSECUTIVE SEASONS. IN '93, HE BECAME ONLY THE TENTH PLAYER TO WIN THE AWARD UNANIMOUSLY. WHAT A GUY!

KEY: HR: HOME-RUN • RBI: RUNS BATTED IN • BA: BATTING AVERAGE



WRITTEN BY ASAM AHMAD

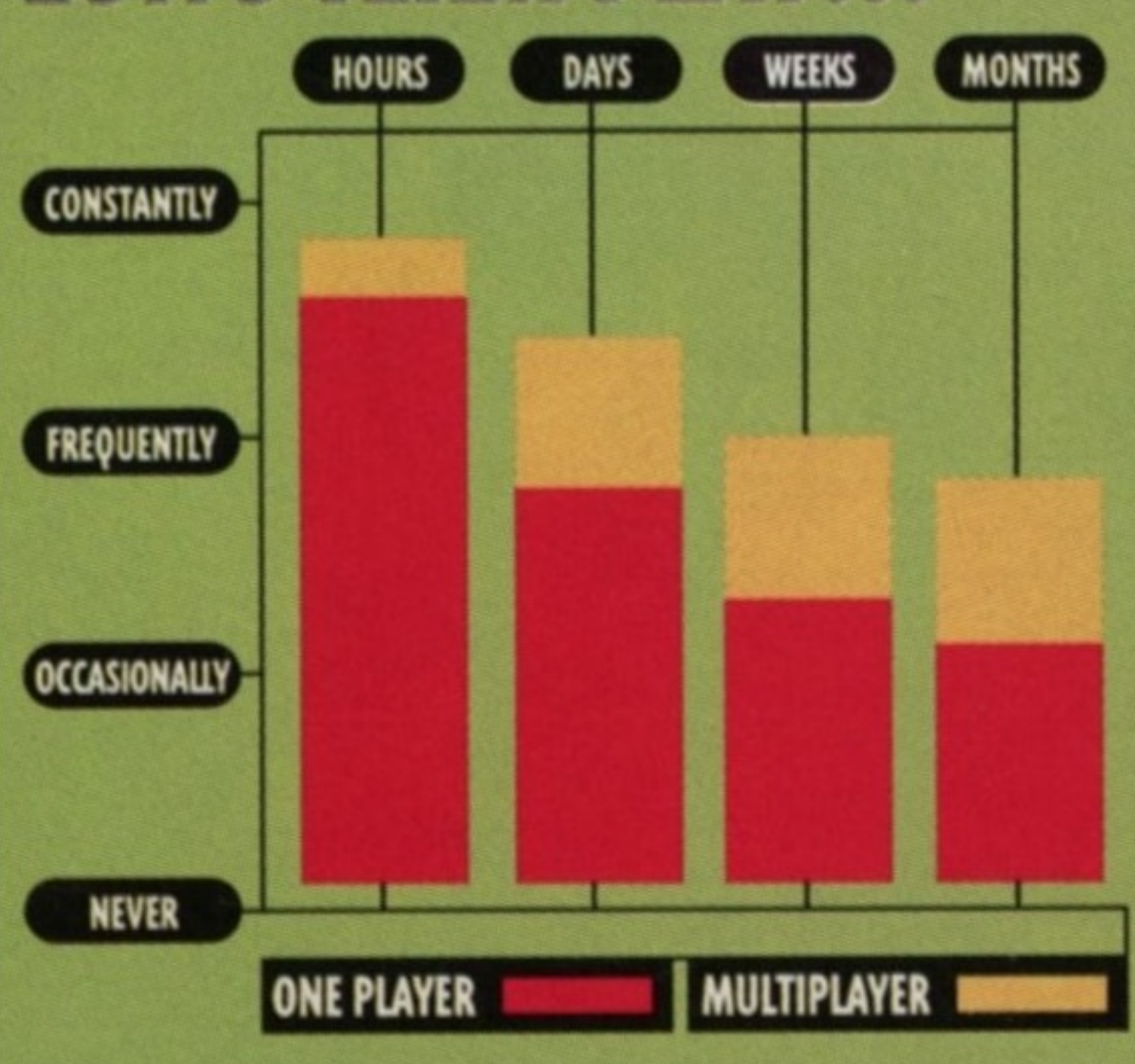
BASEBALL

the mound. Mastering this isn't too difficult though, so the challenge starts to wane over time. The excitement only resurges when you actually start to pitch badly...

IS IT A HOME-RUN...?

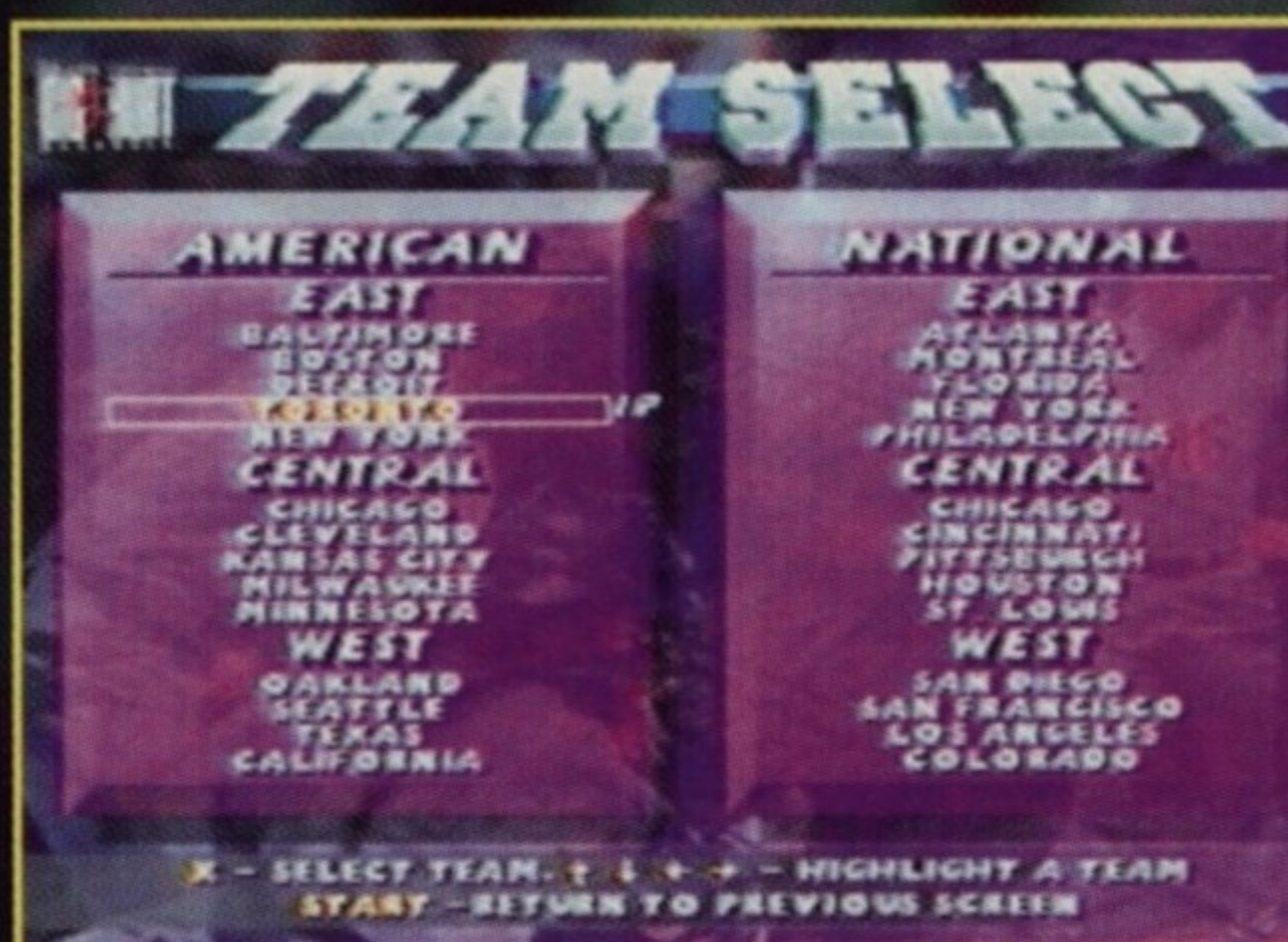
Frank Thomas' game does actually play quite well and is good fun for two players even if it's lacking in the single player mode. It doesn't quite have the same head-to-head appeal as football games, for example, but that's more down to the nature of baseball itself. *Big Hurt Baseball* makes good use of the PlayStation's graphical abilities, with well drawn playing fields and surrounding visuals. The motion captured players move smoothly, but if there's anything in the graphical department that lets the game down, it's the slightly blocky characters that appear occasionally as the screen zooms around the pitch. The viewmode can be changed, but only through three different elevations, plus a chase view.

LONG TERM PLAY...



The in-game sound is functional, not wild and overtly special, however all the noises the game makes are authentic, and the speech, though sparse, is similarly informative without being overly annoying. *Frank Thomas* could have done with a bit more, especially commentary – perhaps the biggest omission in the game.

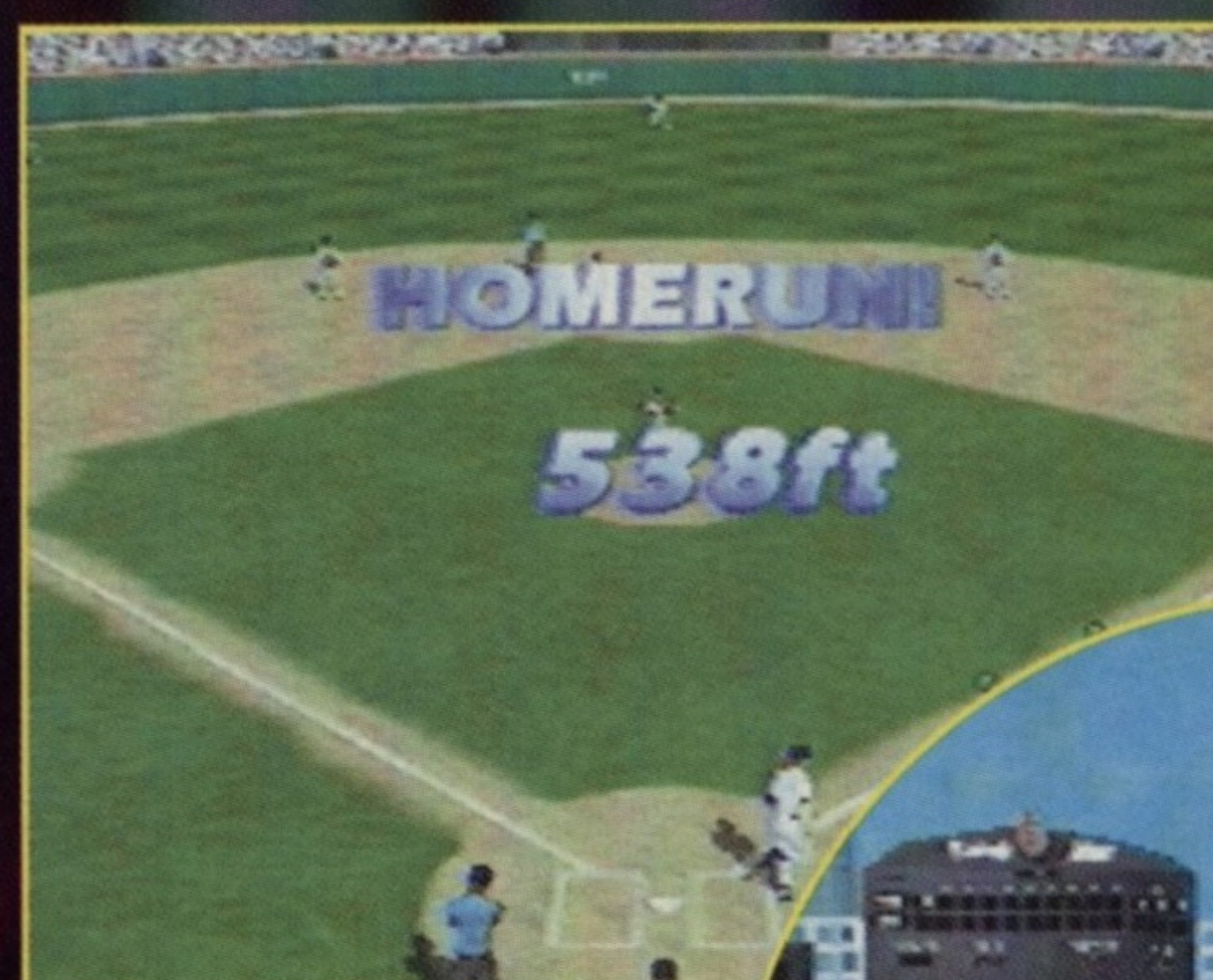
Overall, the attention to detail in the game is high. You can play in 14 'real' stadiums, each with accurate detail, and with all the 700+ players' stats included. Fans of real baseball will love *Big Hurt*, but the rest of us will find it restricted due to the lack of action and pace. The best attempt yet.



[ABOVE] All the teams from both the American and National leagues are selectable for play in each game.



[ABOVE] There are four variations on the view mode, changing the angle to high, medium, ground or chase.



[ABOVE] Despite the computer opponent hitting further than my Grandslam, he only scored three.



PLAY+

LOOKS: ●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS: ●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY: ●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE: ●●●●●●●●●●
SINGLE PLAYER: ●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 81%

Just short of a home-run

ALTERNATIVELY:

3D BASEBALL (OUT AUGUST)
VR BASEBALL (OUT SEPTEMBER)



[ABOVE] The bases are loaded. All that's needed is a home-run. The crowd falls silent. Can he do it...?

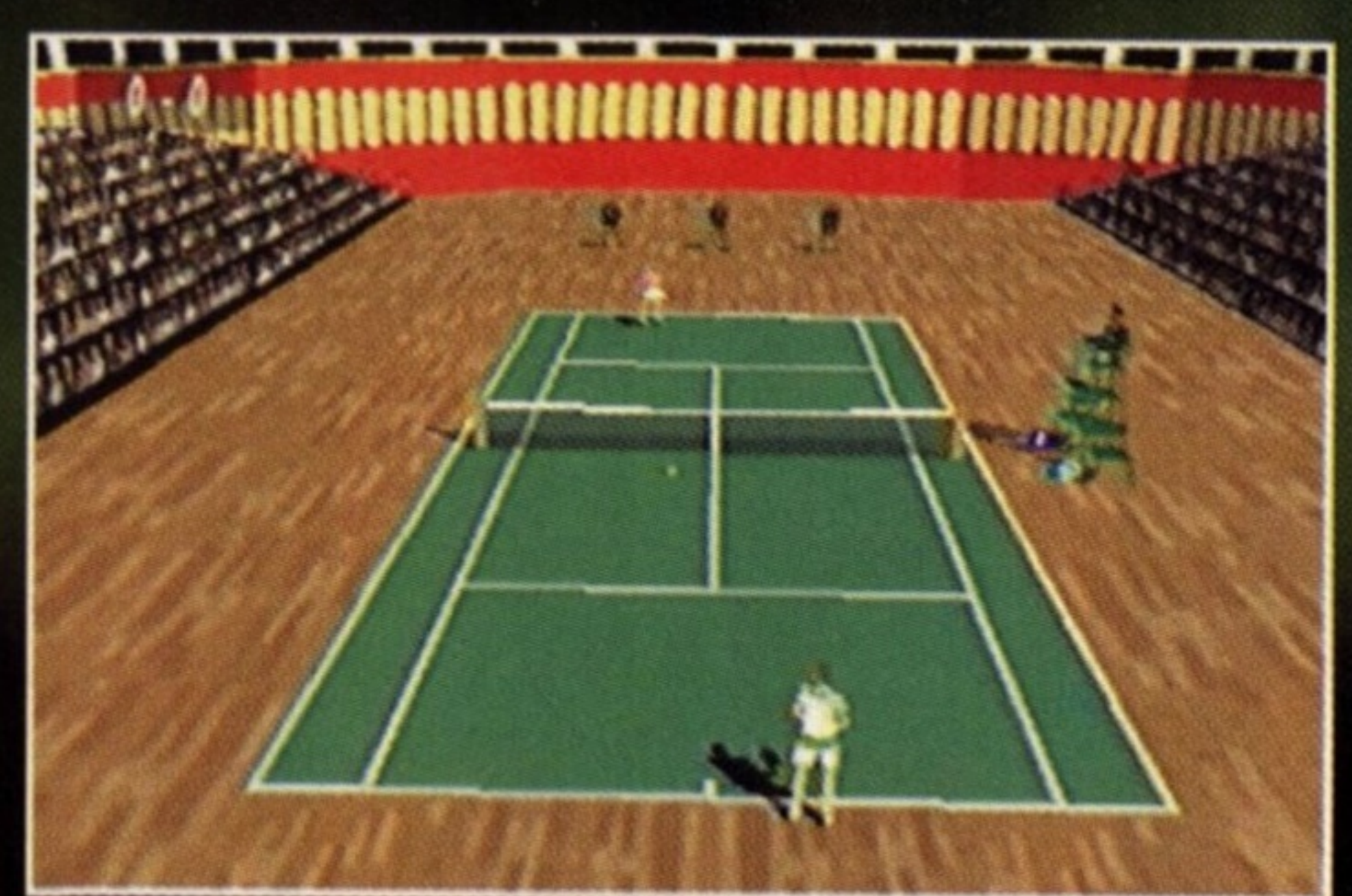


[ABOVE] Grandslam! Four runs in one hit! Now that's what I call style...

review sampras extreme

SEE YOU IN COURT!

EIGHT DIFFERENT COURTS ARE AVAILABLE IN *SAMPRAS EXTREME* AND YOU WILL PLAY ON ALL OF THEM THROUGH THE TOURNAMENT MODE. RANGING FROM THE FRANKFURT CHAMPIONSHIP TO THE US CHALLENGE AND THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN. EACH HAS A DIFFERENT SURFACE MADE UP OF EITHER CLAY, GRASS, HARD OR INDOOR. THESE CAN HAVE AN OUTCOME ON HOW WELL YOU PLAY, SO YOUR PLAYER IS LIKELY TO MOVE FASTER ON AN INDOOR COURT, AND THE BALL WILL BOUNCE MORE ON A HARD SURFACE. THEN AGAIN, EACH PLAYER IS SLOWER ON THE GRASS SURFACE, SO CHOOSE CAREFULLY IF YOU'RE JUST GETTING STARTED.



SAMPRAS EX



HE'S THE WORLD TENNIS CHAMPION AND NOBODY CAN BEAT HIM. CODEMASTERS IS THE FIRM ENTRUSTED TO ENSURE THAT THIS WORLD DOMINANCE TRANSLATES ONTO THE PLAYSTATION. PLAY TAKES THE UMPIRE'S CHAIR.

He's number one

and so's his PlayStation game, Pete Sampras, that is.

Summer is just around the corner, which means long, clear nights, days on the beach, bloody hot publishing offices with no air conditioning, and tennis. Thankfully, *Sampras Extreme* allows you to indulge in some top racket action without you having to break into a sweat, but you'll probably still feel the need to insult the umpire if he makes a bad decision.

A TENNIS ACE

Codemasters has brought us what is without doubt the most impressive PlayStation tennis sim to date. Up to four players can play in a doubles match, but there's always the singles match option. It couldn't be simpler - choose the character you want from a selection of 24 (12 male, 12 female, including Pete Sampras himself), then choose from one of eight fictional venues around the world to play in (honestly, fancy calling Wimbledon the Putney Arena!). Right, I'm not going to beat around the proverbial bush, because *Sampras Extreme* is the most playable, and certainly the most enjoyable tennis sim I've ever played, and it's clearly going to take some beating.



[ABOVE] Now I've yet to see any players do this four times in one rally at Wimbledon, but in *Sampras Extreme* you can get away with it.

COURT SPEEDING!

For a start, the game has some of the best graphics yet seen on any PlayStation sports game. The players are represented by some stunning motion captured efforts (with movements taken from professional players) and they look utterly realistic. The serving system, represented by stopping a circle that flies up the screen, is a little tricky at first, but practice with the slow speed and it becomes easy enough. We've heard of players smashing the ball at over 100mph. Well, it actually gives the impression that it goes that speed when hit hard, thanks to some mathematically engineered work. The stadiums and

outdoor courts also really give an impression of size as the camera rotates around them and the roars of the crowds echo around. Not to mention a first-person perspective which is ideal for learning how to time your shots. Yes, that's first-person perspective. In this mode it seems harder to move around the court fluidly, so it's not really a long term playing option, but treated as a tutorial, it's excellent.

"The first-person perspective is ideal for learning how to time your shots"

TOURNAMENT TIME

Sampras Extreme offers the player a wealth of options, starting with the players, who can be customised according to their speed, service, topspin

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Codemasters
Customer support: 01926 814132
Price: £44.99
Release date: July



MULTIPLE PLAYERS MEMORY CARD



MULTI-TAP

XTREME

EXCLUSIVE!



[ABOVE] There are some really funny caricatures amongst the 24 players, including punk rockers and a guy in a Mexican Sombrero!

and diving abilities. Naturally, it's advisable to play against a weaker and slower opponent to get the hang of exactly when to return the ball. One player can compete against the other 21 in the tournament mode. Starting as a low ranking player, you can progress through the Extreme World Tour by defeating the others. Thankfully there are three difficulty levels, easy, medium and hard, and various court surfaces for each stadium, comprising of clay, grass, hard, and indoor and one, three or five sets can be played.

The feature that really makes *Sampras Extreme* shine is the simultaneous four player doubles mode, which enables the gamer to progress and improve their reaction times. Alternatively, play the Knockout option. This allows up to four players, all who must play singles matches until the winner remains. Although similar to the tournament mode, there is no pressure to reach the highest rank – it's more fun orientated as you all desperately try to eliminate each other.

One of the best aspects of *Sampras Extreme* is that unlike most other tennis games, you can make logical progression and highlight your players weak spots,



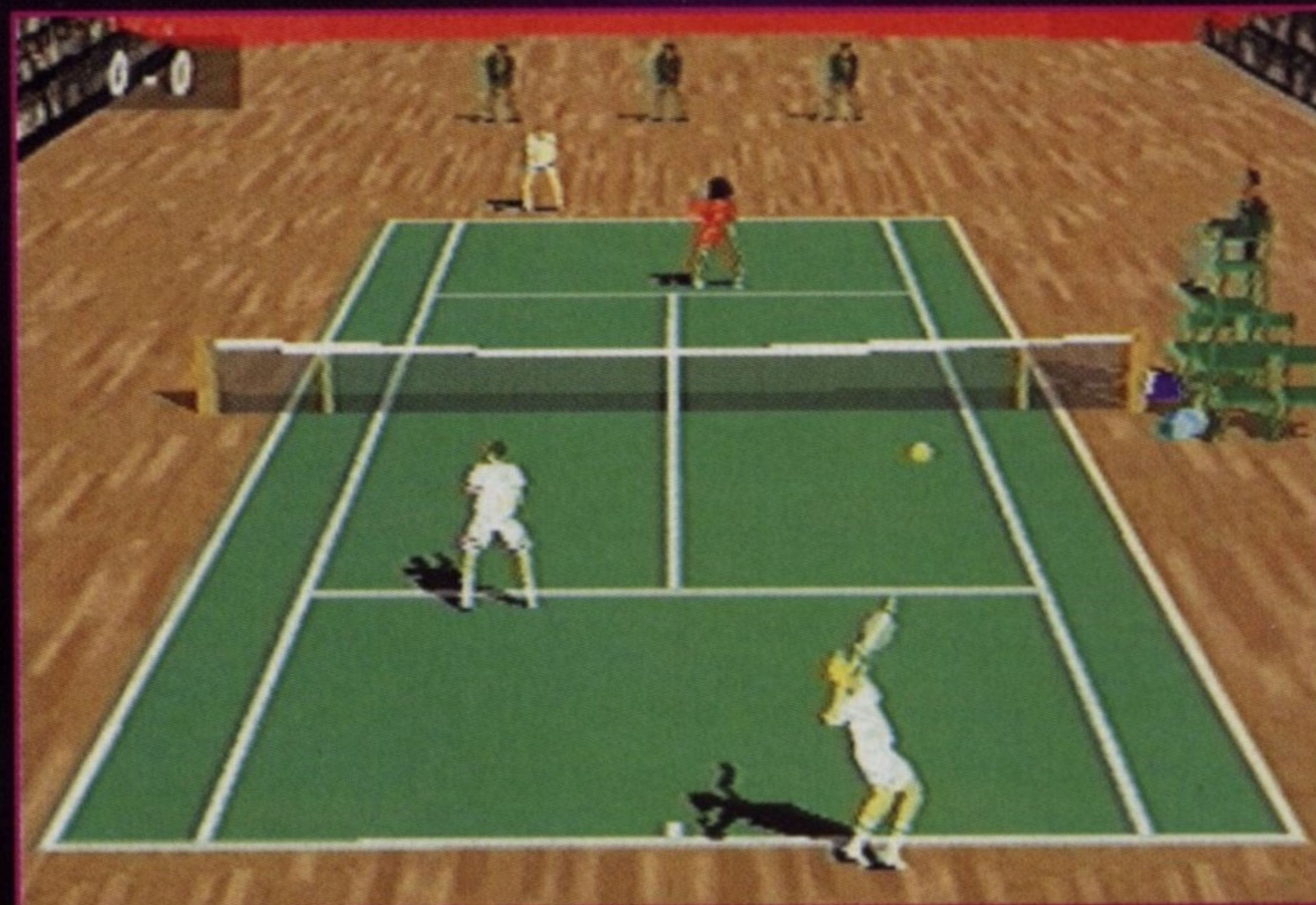
[ABOVE] The courts look mighty impressive, and come complete with ballboys and much hated umpire. This pic shows the stadium in its entirety, thanks to a special viewpoint.

which gives *SE* a real addictive quality.

To sum up, I wouldn't hesitate to buy this. The overall atmosphere is made more convincing with the sounds of grunting players, shouting umpires and cheering crowds. You pick up the control system to instinctive level after 20 minutes, so no probs there, and countless options will keep even the most sceptic of players interested. Basically, if you love tennis, then you must have *Sampras Extreme*, so try it out because you won't be disappointed.



[ABOVE] Motion captured magic once again as the players shake hands and change sides.

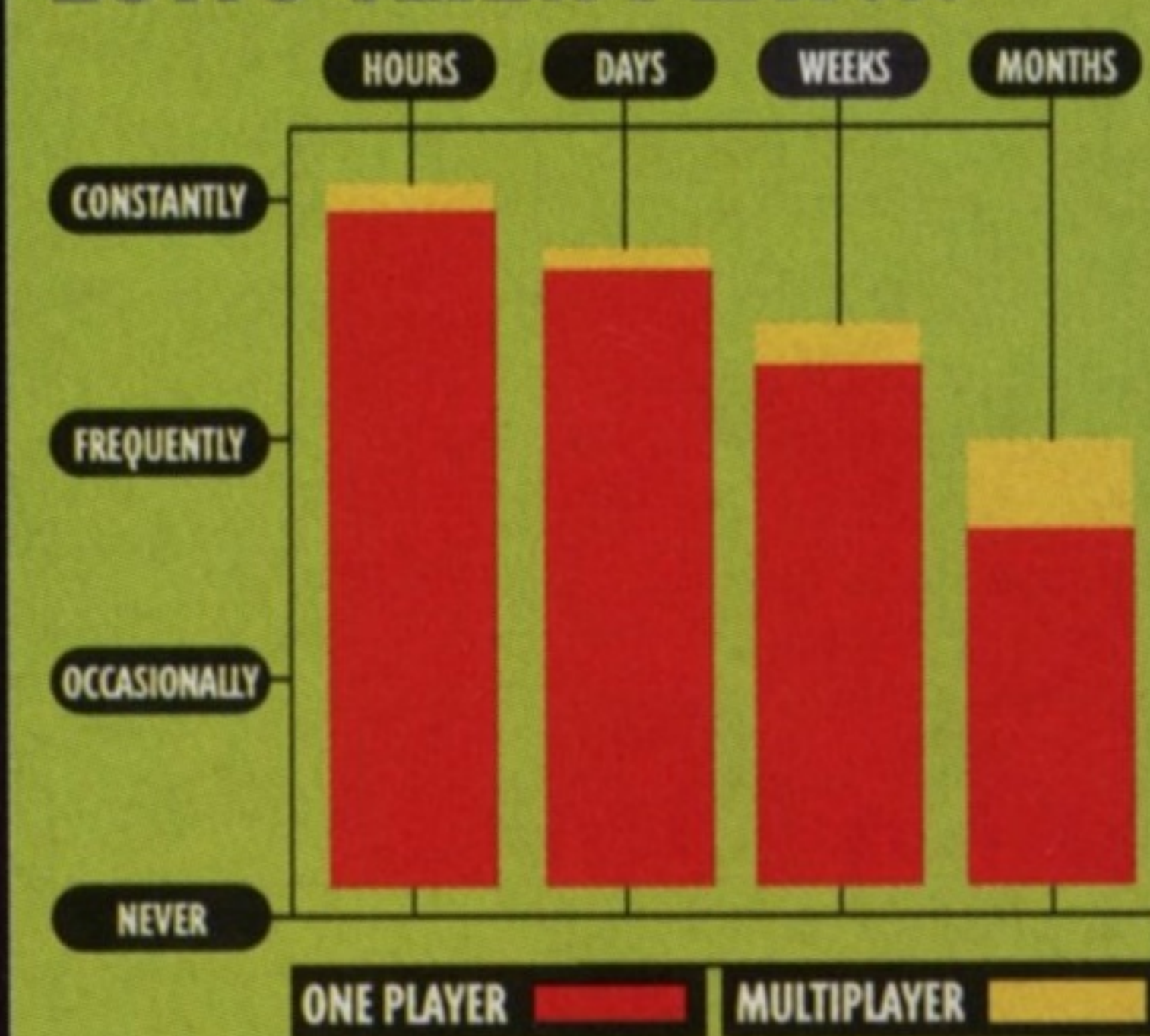


[ABOVE] Playing indoors has its advantages, seeing as though the surface makes the ball go higher (using a lob on here is great for frustrating your opponent) and your player will run faster, making those quick serves easier to return.



[ABOVE] Those cocky players stride onto the court and then take a seat before the main action begins, and it all looks so realistic thanks to some top motion captured graphics.

LONG TERM PLAY...



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
REFLEXES	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 90%

Games, set and match to Mr Sampras!

ALTERNATIVELY:

V-TENNIS (OUT JULY)
CENTRE COURT (OUT JULY)

VIRTUAL

AS THE GOLF GENRE MOVES INTO THE NEXT GENERATION, IS THERE STILL ROOM FOR A SWEET & SIMPLE RENDITION OF THE SPORT? CORE'S VIRTUAL GOLF HOPES SO.

GOLF

"Nice shaft,

good head for a driver, but I don't think much of your balls." Talk about a catchy way to get you to read a golf review. I take it I now have your attention.

Virtual Golf is the latest of many such games to reach the PlayStation from PC shores this year. The idea being that every new system needs at least one golf simulation, but then the race is on to see who brings it out first. More than three and its taking the piss!

Everything starts off okay on the first hole (cue golfing analogies), with *Virtual Golf* gaining a shot lead over *PGA Tour '96* by having four 18 hole courses on offer: The Bowerly, Kilmarney, Penpero and Glenlochrie, instead of just two. It then rolls home another birdie on the second by allowing amateurs access only to the first two courses, which means because you start as an amateur, you have to become quite competent at the game

before you can make the cut, and enjoy the climax of the third and fourth courses. Indeed, *Virtual Golf* sails through the first nine holes due to the

inclusion of a variety in modes of play, which always makes for a better gaming experience. In addition to matchplay and strokeplay options, the skins game is there (win a prize for every hole you win outright, most

money after 18 holes wins) and two fresh (sort of) options in the Derby Scramble and Shootout (see boxout). But, although *Virtual Golf* starts well, like Greg Norman in this year's US masters, it

ultimately fails to deliver over the crucial back nine and ends up feeling slightly embarrassed when it meets its rivals in the clubhouse.

FORE! NOT PHWOOAR!

Die-hard gamers will know that golf video games are very neat and tidy visually. The graphics, more than with most genres, are what makes or breaks each one, as the control method, options and difficulty rarely vary much. However, the visuals in *Virtual Golf* are rather poor. The ground is nice and bumpy, with all the usual traps such as the rough and bunkers littering each hole, but, with the exception of the greens, the execution of each element is pretty dire, particularly the static crowds who

"V Golf is just bland, bland, bland..."

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Core Design
Customer support: 01332 297797
Price: £44.99
Release date: July

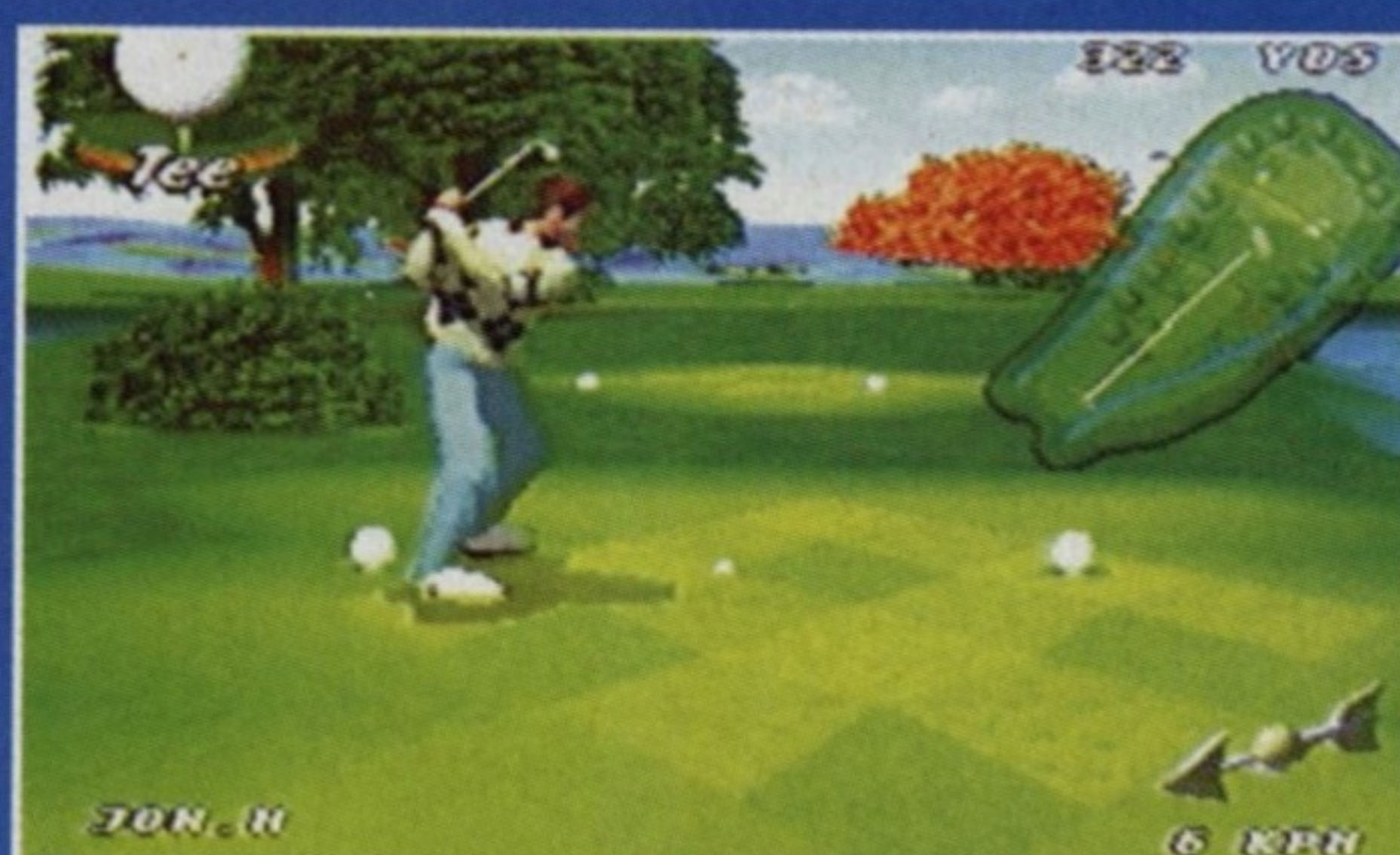


MULTIPLE PLAYERS MEMORY CARD

THE DRIVING TEST

WHY BOTHER SHELLING OUT WADS OF CASH FOR THE GREEN FEES AND MEMBERSHIP COSTS WHEN YOU CAN HAVE A FEW HOURS ESSENTIAL PRACTICE AT THE DRIVING RANGE FOR JUST A COUPLE OF QUID (IN

REAL LIFE OF COURSE)? STILL, THE DRIVING RANGE OPTION ON HERE IS A WELCOME ADDITION, AND SHOULD BE TRIED OUT BY ANYONE WHO IS NEW TO THE GAME AND DOESN'T KNOW THEIR SWING FROM THEIR SLICE.



GOLF TEE V!

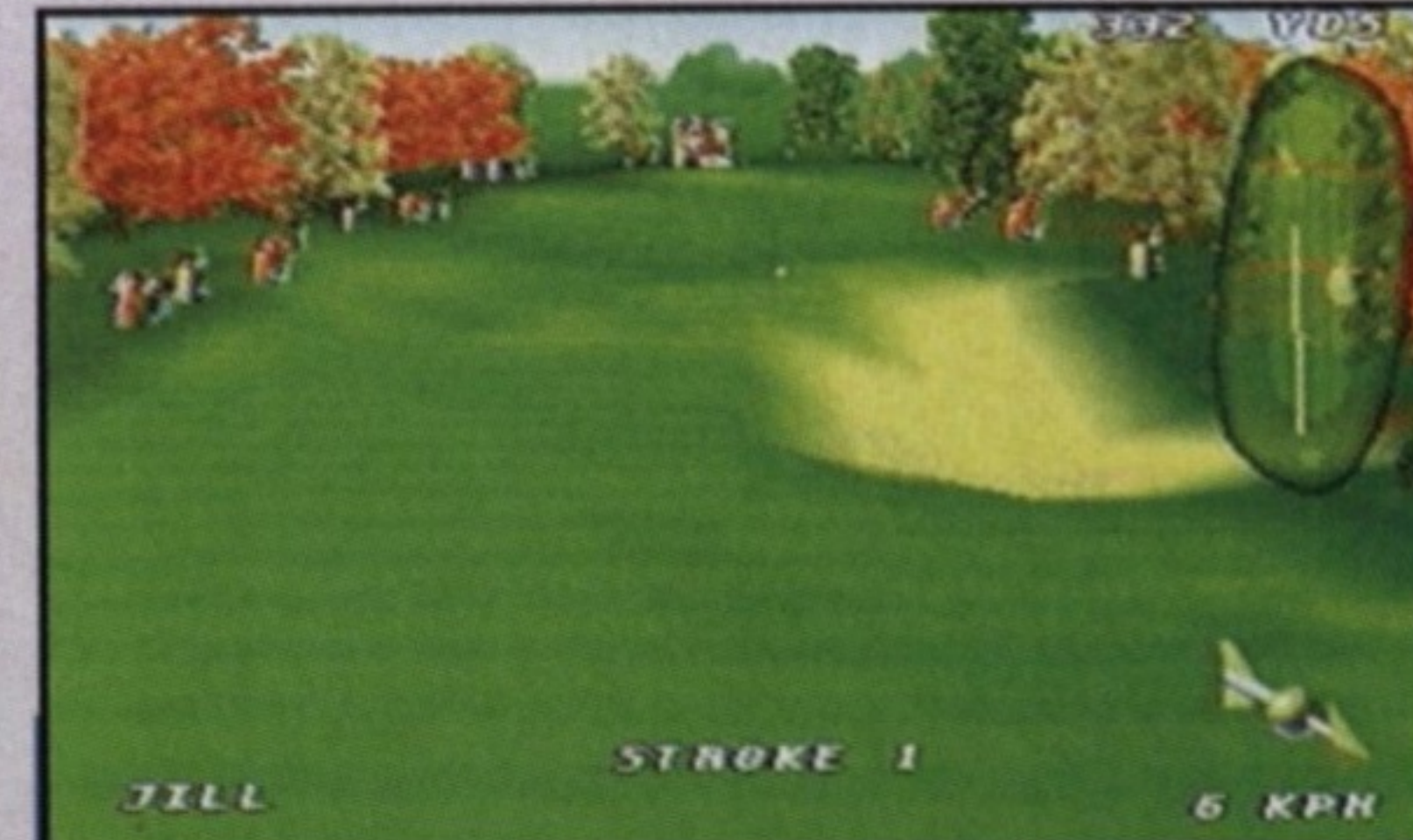
Nowadays those cameras can track a ball for the entire distance and height it travels. *Virtual Golf* lives up to its name by offering all these ways of viewing the ball, whether it kisses the fairway, sinks into the river or gets stuck in the rough!



[STATIC CAM] STAYS BEHIND YOUR PLAYER NO MATTER HOW FAR THE BALL GOES.



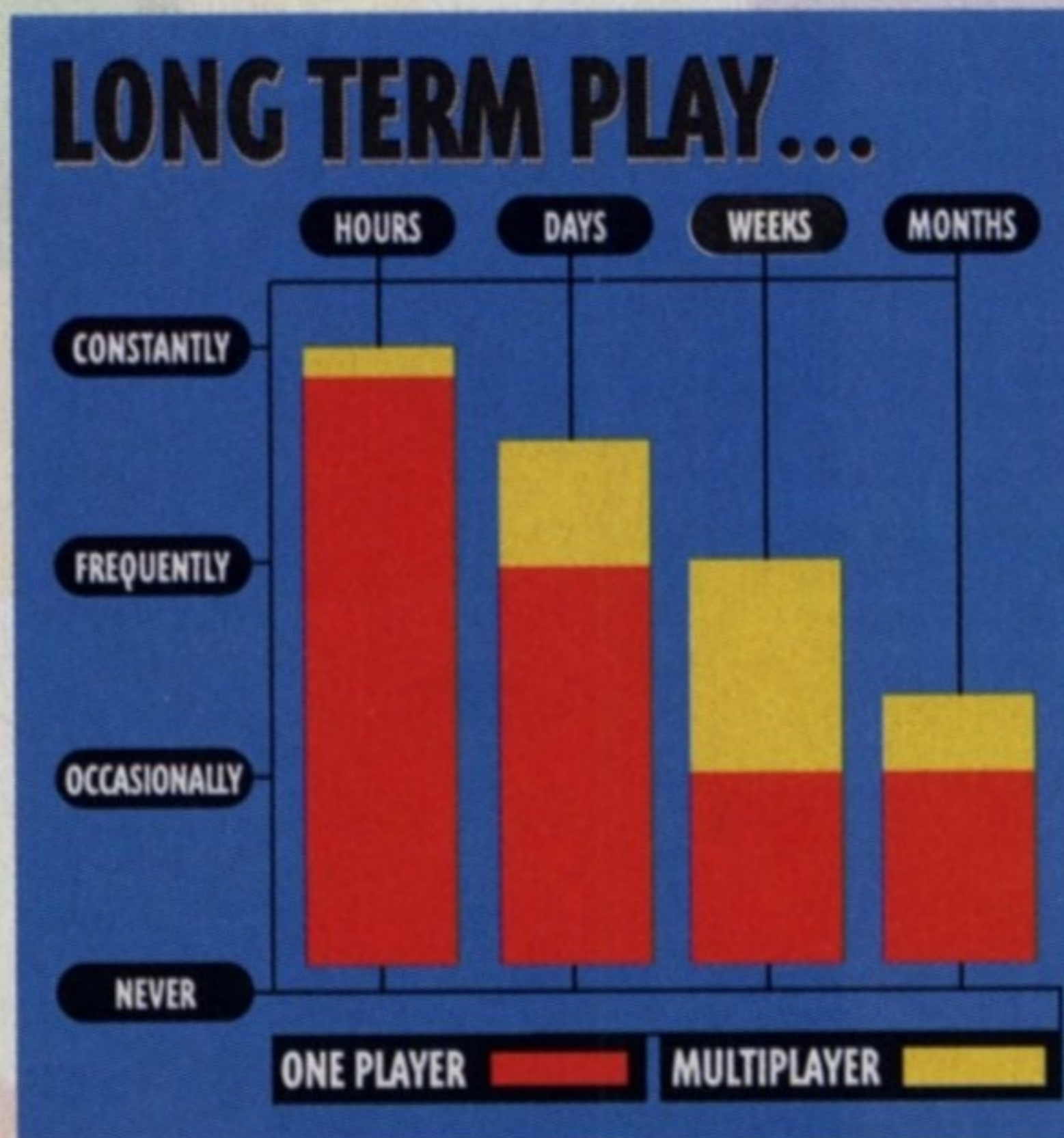
[AIM CAM] STAYS BEHIND YOUR PLAYER, BUT TRACKS THE DIRECTION OF THE BALL AS IT RISES AND FALLS.



[TRACK CAM] THIS IS JUST LIKE THE ONE ON TV. IT FOLLOWS THE BALL BUT FIXES ON THE HOLE.



[ABOVE] Very easy this. Just stop the moving ball on the top white circle for the swing, and stop it again on the bottom circle to get more power. Synchronise them both perfectly and you'll perform a breath-taking shot!



constantly face the same direction – even if your ball lands in front of them! What happened to the huge crowds of people shuffling along, or the unlucky sod who gets hit by a ball that's gone too wide?

It's all fine and dandy for Core to tell us that unlike many other golf sims, *Virtual Golf* places its emphasis on simplicity and that all-important "pick up and play" factor but it just doesn't work. Unfortunately, *Virtual Golf* falls into the trap of being neither good enough to make converts out of non-golf fans nor complex enough, visually and gameplay-wise, to appeal to golf nuts, who would be advised to wait for either Gremlin's *Actua Golf* or Konami *Links*.

NICE TOUCHES

Playing the game certainly isn't without its pleasurable moments, as *Virtual Golf* does boast some nice touches, such as being able to raise the elevation of the view behind the player to look down the hole and plan your drive (looking from

the default camera angle – there are many) and 65 well constructed CPU players, each given ratings for putting, chipping and driving. The sheer weight of numbers means there is a competitive edge in one player mode.

Although nothing new, the control system is the simple set direction up and press once on the swing bar to set strength and again to make pure contact with the ball, which at least works well, and added effects such as wind speeds, a circular icon to show the angles on the greens and commentary all add to that Sunday afternoon golf atmosphere.

But, when you've seen even incomplete titles like *Actua Golf* and *Konami Links*, *Virtual Golf* is just bland, bland, bland.



[ABOVE] Arrggh!! There's nothing worse (or more dangerous) than having to hit the ball away from a tree in the rough. Ask Nick Faldo.



[TRACK/PAN CAM] THE CAMERA FOLLOWS THE BALL WHEN IT HITS THE GROUND, THEN IT ROTATES.



[SPLIT CAM] AS YOU HIT THE BALL, THE CAMERA SWAPS TO A VIEW THAT TRACKS THE BALL.



[CRANE CAM] AS YOU CAN GUESS, THIS FOLLOWS THE BALL FROM A TREETOP LEVEL.



[ABOVE] The crowds in *Virtual Golf* are flat and lifeless. Surely Core could've animated them?



[ABOVE] Over 60 CPU players with their own individual abilities! Just imagine trying to beat them in the tournament...

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●○
SOUNDS	●●●●●○
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●○
VALUE	●●●●●○
SIMPLICITY	●●●●●○

PLAYED 61%

Not what you'd call a major player

ALTERNATIVELY:

PGA TOUR '96 (86%) DEC '95
WORLD CUP GOLF (72%) MAR '96

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '96

NO SIGN OF A MADDEN GAME, GAME DAY LEAVES ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT. DOES NFL QB CLUB '96 FIT SNUGLY INTO THE SLOT MARKED BEST PLAYSTATION AMERICAN FOOTBALL GAME?

US Football fans

feeling deprived of a game worth splashing out nearly

£50 of hard earned on can now leap up and down with joy and generally shout American things like yee-hah, because *NFL Quarterback Club '96* is the latest American Football release to hit the PlayStation. And although it couldn't be described as brilliant, is very playable indeed.

If you're not a fan, you can't help approaching games based on foreign sports like this with some trepidation. It is, after all, a Yank thing and any nation which makes such a fuss over something as basic as apple pie, and needs pads and a helmet to play a game with less contact in it than rugby, is automatically suspect. Zenophobic, moi?

Still, some sports are a hell of a lot more enjoyable as video games, rather than as something to play or watch, and gridiron in its *NFL Quarterback Club* form is a good example of this.

For a start, *NFL Quarterback Club '96* does all the basics right by covering every aspect of the sport, all tied-up sweetly with some well thought out option screens, simple play selection, an eight-player option and a good rendered intro sequence depicting the grunt and groans of on-field action. Thanks to the NFL licence, there are 30 big, muscle bound teams to choose from, and each has their own offensive and defensive playing styles, making for plenty of variety.

SECRET PLEASURES

Now, this is all meat and drink stuff to gridiron fans, but one of the striking aspects of *QB Club* is that if you're into video games, rather than sports, it's still fun to play. Guys at PLAY Mansion who wouldn't normally be seen dead playing anything other than beat-'em-ups, racers or *Resident Evil* have been spotted quietly tucked away in corners, fiddling with the 44 (yes, 44) different camera views in *QB Club*. Pondering whether to

"A contest of minds as well as digital dexterity."

WRITTEN BY IAN LYNCH & STEVE HARDY



[ABOVE] The players run on, kitted out in practically everything except for bullet proof vests. The crowd cheers and the frantic commentary begins. It's just like the real thing!

run or pass the ball on 3rd and three and debating the relative merits of the Pro Set and Shotgun formations. For a niche sport, it is easy to get into and can actually be said to have genuine widespread appeal. Especially as a two player game, where it becomes a contest of minds as well as digital dexterity, with the combatant coaches trying out all of the nine offensive and defensive formations on offer in the quest to try and steal any advantage going over their rival.

TAKE THE ROUGH WITH THE SMOOTH

This is a noticeable improvement over *NFL Game Day*, as it offers the player more moves (players can dive, use skill moves and perform bone-crunching tackles) and new options. Saying that,

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Acclaim
Customer support: 0171 344 5000
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out Now



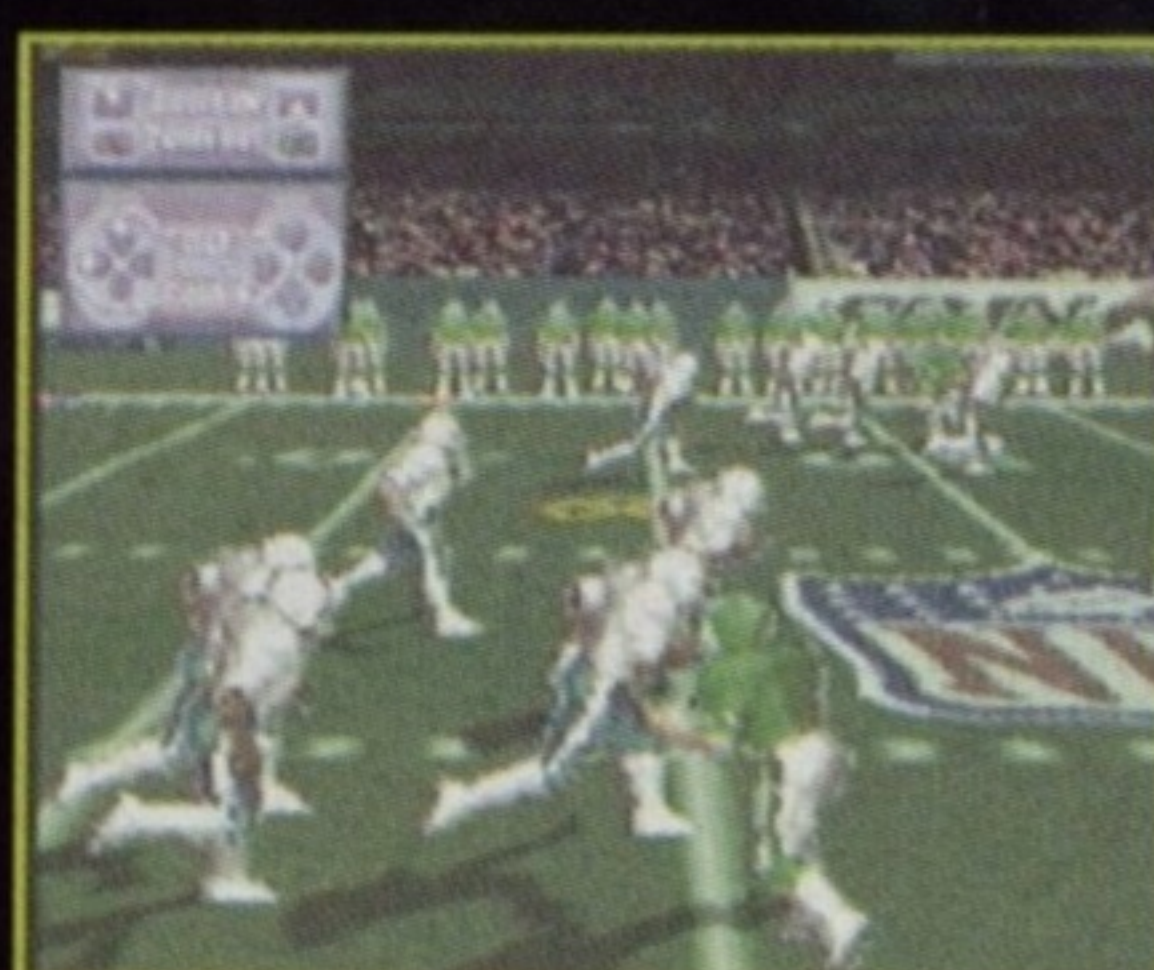
MULTIPLE PLAYERS MEMORY CARD



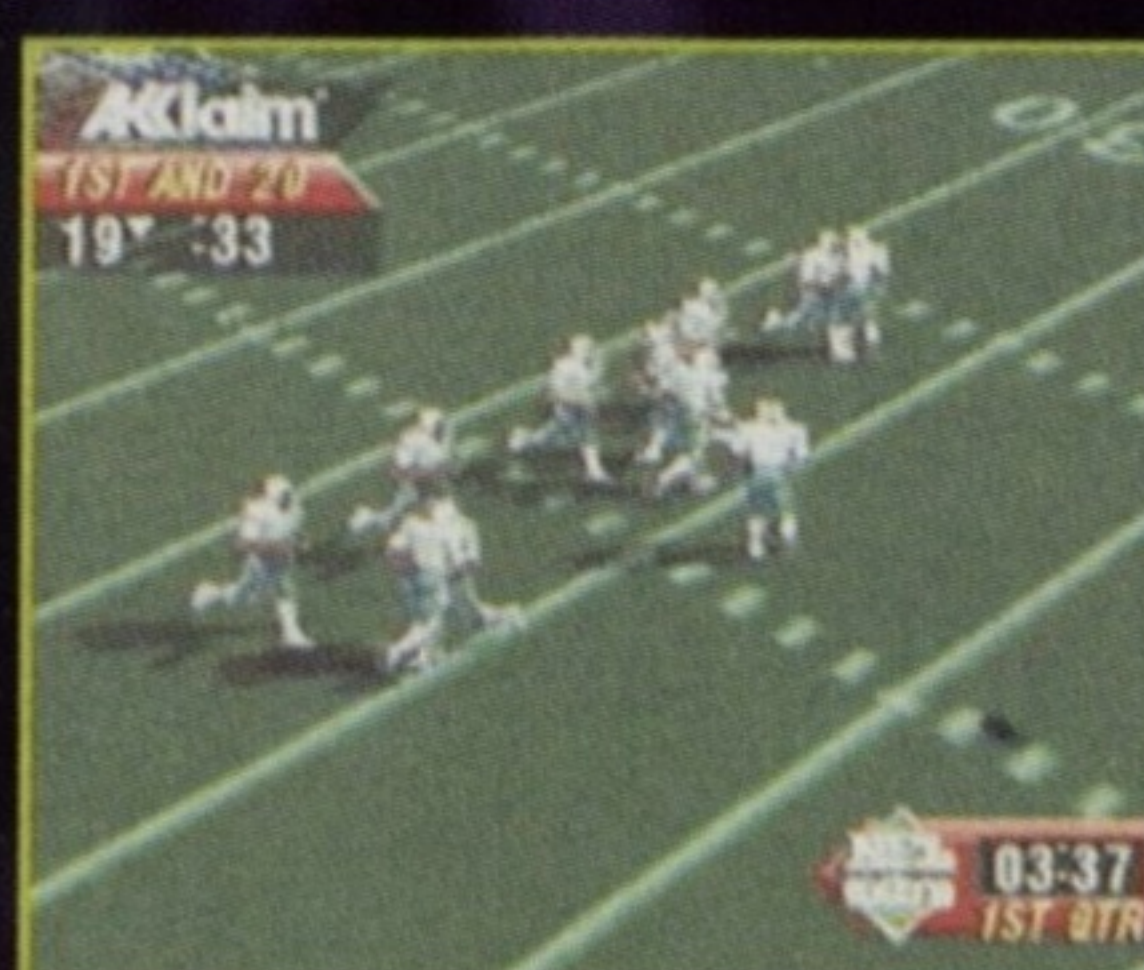
MULTI-TAP

WATCH AND LEARN

WHILST THE DIFFERENT POSITIONING MAKES UP A WHOPPING 44 DIFFERENT WAYS TO VIEW THE ACTION, THERE ARE NINE MAIN DIFFERENT CAMERAS USED. HERE'S A QUICK RUNDOWN OF EACH OF THE CAMERA VIEWS. YOU'LL NEVER NEED TO WATCH IT ON CHANNEL 4 AGAIN!



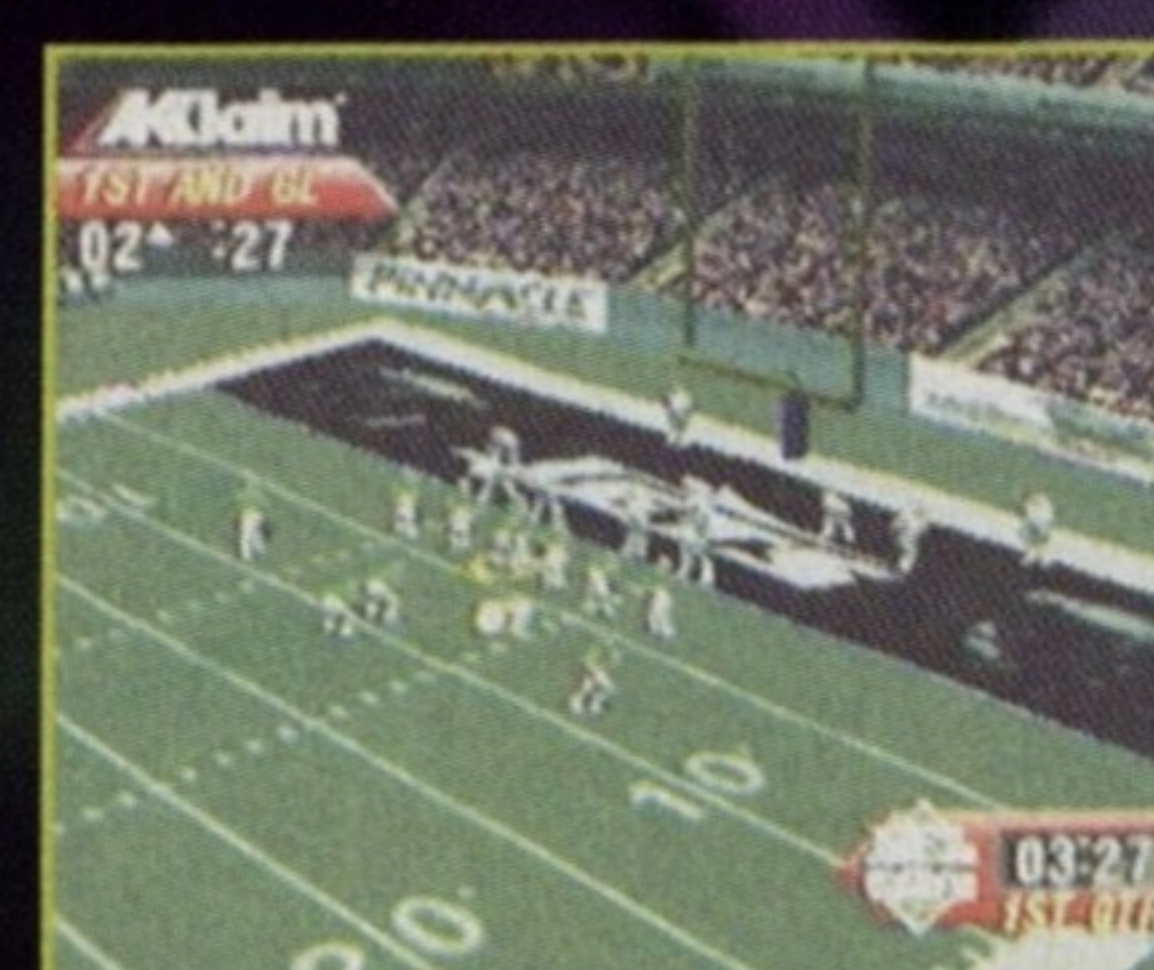
[SHOULDER CAM] This one zooms in behind a player, enabling you to see the action over his shoulder! A bit confusing, but exciting.



[ACTION CAM] So called because it gives a bigger, more angled view of the field and lets you see where all the players are.



[SUPER PASS CAM] Gives a closer view of the action and passing. One of the best views for planning overall strategies.



[CROWD CAM] Another view from further back, but also including shots of the mad American crowds to make everything more realistic.

ERBACK CLUB '96

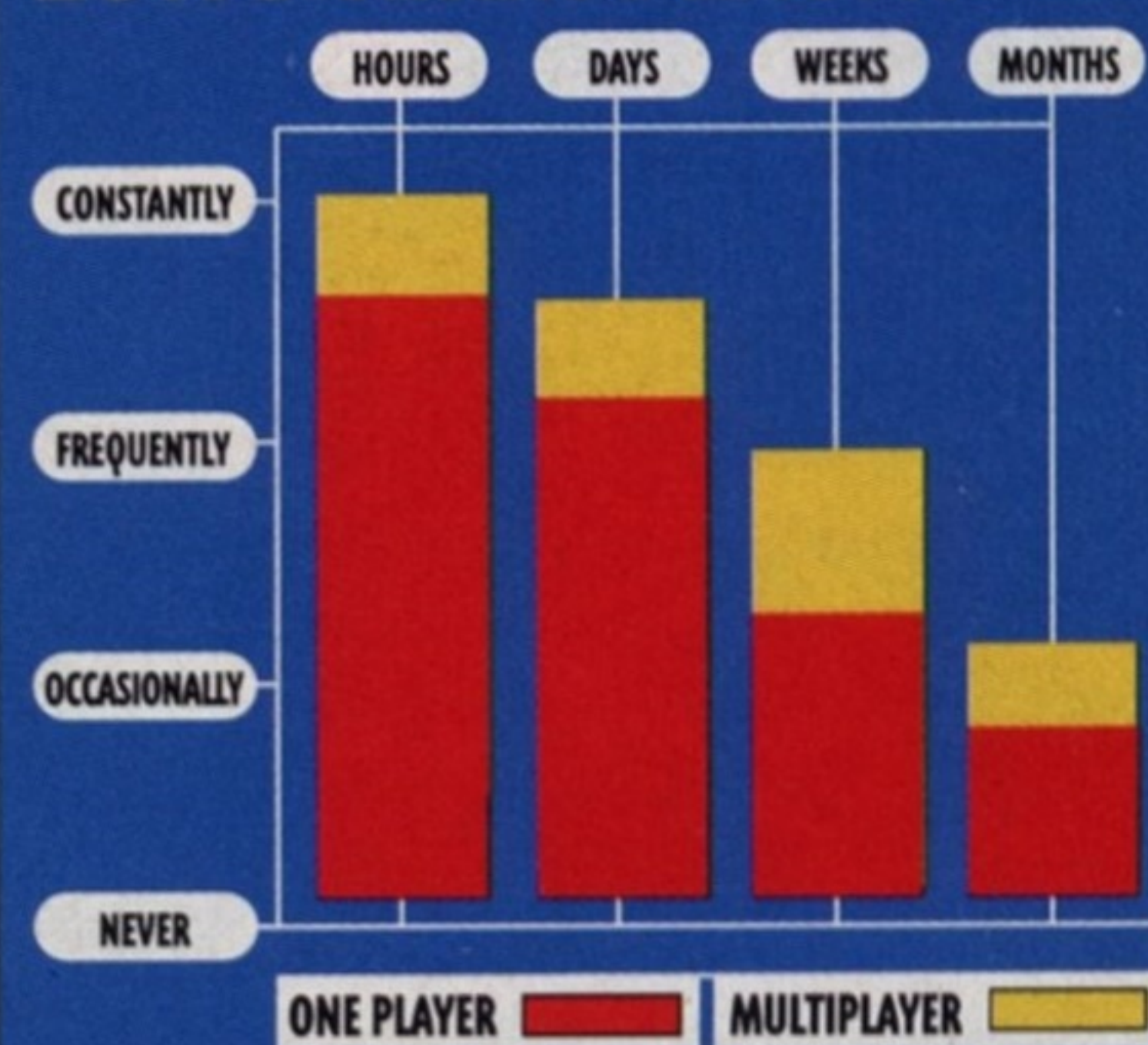
PLAY IT AGAIN

THE REPLAY FEATURE IS ONE OF THE GAME'S BETTER FEATURES. IF YOU'VE SCORED AN AMAZING TOUCHDOWN OR JUST PLAYED AN ACTION-PACKED GAME, THEN THERE'S NOTHING TO STOP YOU FROM REWINDING IT ALL AND WATCHING IT AT A NORMAL SPEED OR IN SLOW MOTION. PLAY THE BEST BITS AND PAUSE THE GAME, JUST TO GLOAT OVER AND BE SMUG!



[LEFT] Touchdown! Yeeesss! The opposing team get the ball over the line and score in style. The crowd goes wild too!

LONG TERM PLAY...



the players, although responsive and smooth, look pretty poor, and they become pixellated when close up. Otherwise, *NFL Quarterback Club* is quietly impressive, and certainly a more playable American Football game than its Sony-published counterpart.

Somewhat compensating for the rather drab in-game graphics (surely the same type of motion-captured animation seen in *adidas Power Soccer* and *Actua Soccer* can be employed here) are the camera views, nine different camera positions which can be placed in up to

eight different angles. It's not going to impress anyone who thinks that the meaning of the saying "beauty is only skin deep" is that the person who came up with this was a loser who can't get a girlfriend, but what the heck.

Anyone as suspicious about American Football games as us, might well be impressed by the playability of *QB Club*. American footy fans, on the other hand, can start celebrating, as they've been well looked after by Team Acclaim.



[ABOVE] This annoying little chap frequently appears, telling you that a player has been in possession of the ball for too long.

PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●●●
CAMERAS	●●●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 80%

NFL QB Club 80, NFL Game Day 73

ALTERNATIVELY:

NFL GAME DAY (73%)
MADDEN '97 (OUT AUG '96)



[BLIMP CAM] Right, we all know what a blimp is, so this one gives the player a view from a great height, as if from an airship.



[COACH CAM] Yes, you can actually view the action from the front of the crowd seats, and rant and rave just like a real frustrated coach



[TV CAM] Another one that goes for realism, but changes its angle every now and then just like the real thing.



[ENDZONE CAM] No matter which team you have chosen, the action can still be viewed from the opposing team's part of the field.



[COWIE CAM] As Bart Simpson might say, don't have a cow, man. Talk about grandstand view, this is the most impressive view.

WHERE'S THE FAT CONTROLLER?

A-TRAIN GIVES THE PLAYER ALMOST COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THE CONSTRUCTION OF ANY CITY. JUST TAKE A LOOK AT THESE OPTIONS SCREENS: THERE'S MORE WHERE THEY CAME FROM. CHOOSING THE RIGHT MODE OF TRANSPORT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT IN A-TRAIN. AFTER ALL, HOW ELSE ARE YOUR VALUED CUSTOMERS GOING TO GET ROUND? THE MORE OFTEN PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS USED, THE MORE MONEY YOU MAKE. SIMPLE REALLY. PLAN PROPERLY AND BUILD LOTS OF ROADS/RAILWAYS, AND YOU'LL ACHIEVE THE PERFECT CITY WHICH IS SHOWN HERE!



A-TRAIN

TRAINS, WEALTH AND POWER ARE WHAT EVERYBODY WANTS, SO IT'S A DAMN GOOD JOB THAT A-TRAIN HAS ARRIVED, OR YOU'LL BE WAITING FOREVER!

If you're one

of those poor, unfortunate souls called commuters you'll probably know all about delays, mistakes and ridiculously high fares that give BR, sorry Railtrack, its reputation. Think you could do better? Eh? Eh? Right, have a go at A-Train then, where control of the entire transportation layout and materials for one city is given to you.

You are faced with building a giant metropolis, constructing all the relevant buildings and are also given the

responsibility of running the public transport. You know, do a Mussolini and make the trains run on time. First time in 50 years, it was. Eee, those were the days!

Right, now I suspect that some of you are falling asleep reading this, seeing as though A-Train appears at first glance to be a boring old game that's full of option screens. Big mistake, because with a bit of perseverance and skill, it is possible to get the hang of it and find yourself quite involved in the action – something that I began to accept after hours of deep thought and frustration.

ON THE BUSES

Also, as well as trains etc. you have to be on the buses, or on their case anyway. If you don't manage them

properly, the customers won't be happy and you'll lose money. No, no, no, that will not do at all. There are so many factors and areas to think about that it gets frightening. Lots of brain power is needed if you're to make money – bread heads will love it!

Visually, the game is average. The bulk of the city and surrounding landscape is viewed from a diagonal perspective but it could have been



[ABOVE] The city development is going well, so it's time to start expanding the roads and railways.

more detailed. Finish making your city, however, and you will be given the option of travelling around it on a train or bus, just to see how far the routes

“Bread heads will love it!”

go. This is shown as a moving 3-D sequence, and is similar to the feature in Theme Park which allowed the player to go round their newly constructed world of wonders. It's still just frippery though.

THINK WHILE YOU DRINK

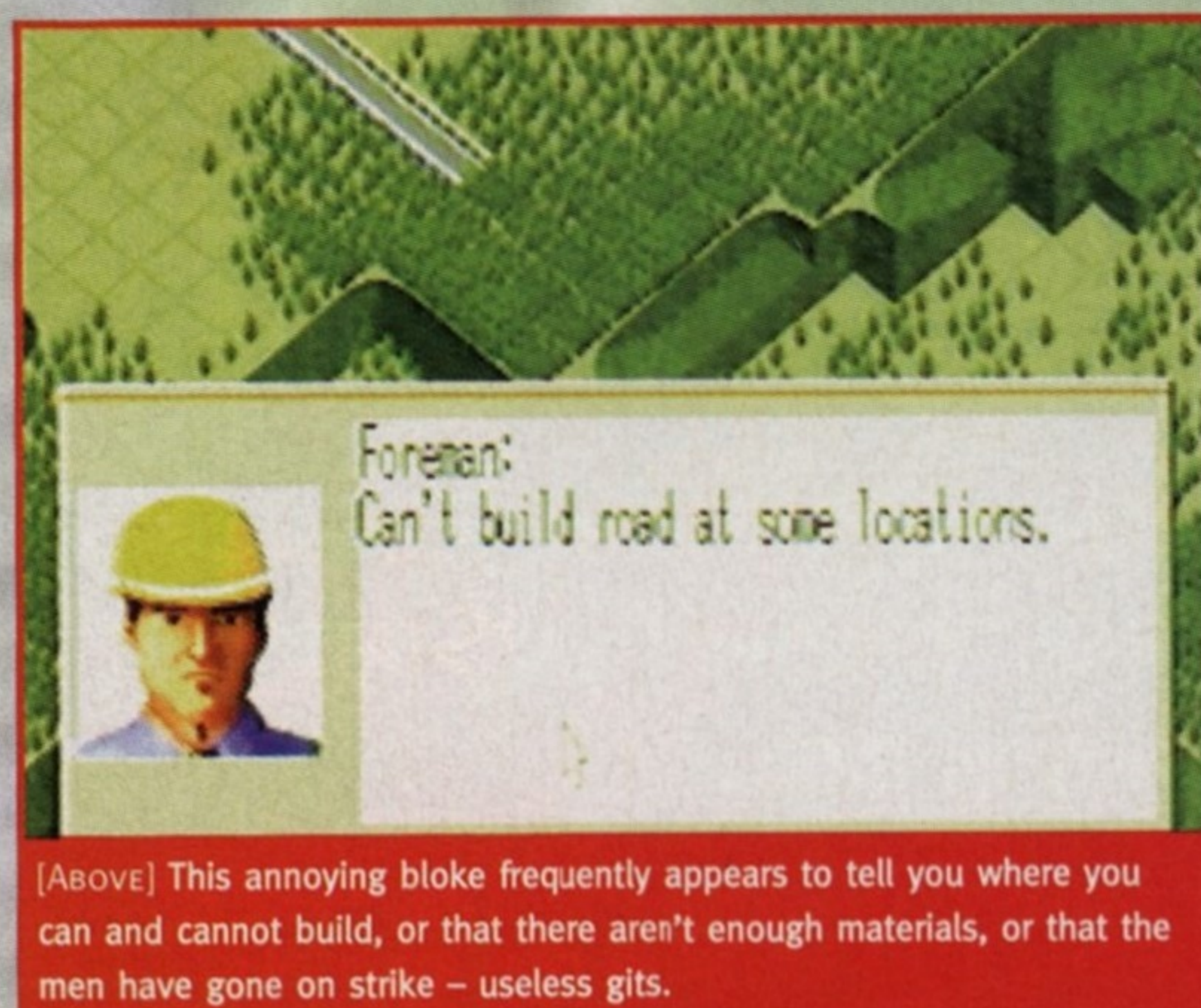
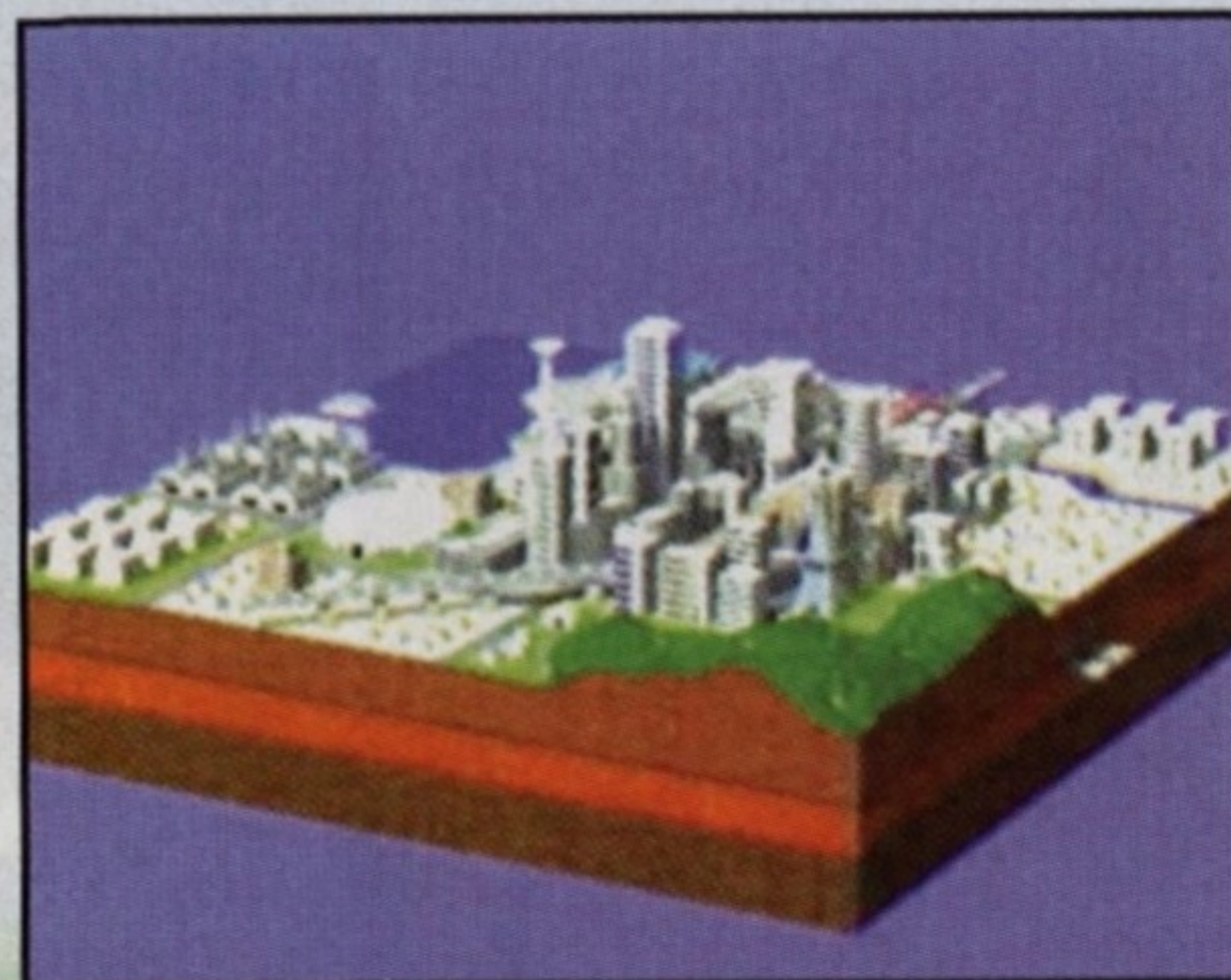
A word of advice – A-Train takes hours to get into, and many will no doubt be put off by the relentless options screens and the countless thinking sessions needed to create the perfect city. The tunes and sound effects are relaxing and

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Maxis (US)
Contact: The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314
Price: £59.99
Release Date: Out Now



[ABOVE] It's the perfect city – no pollution or prostitution, no crime and all the trains run to time. Unlike some major cities in England I know of...

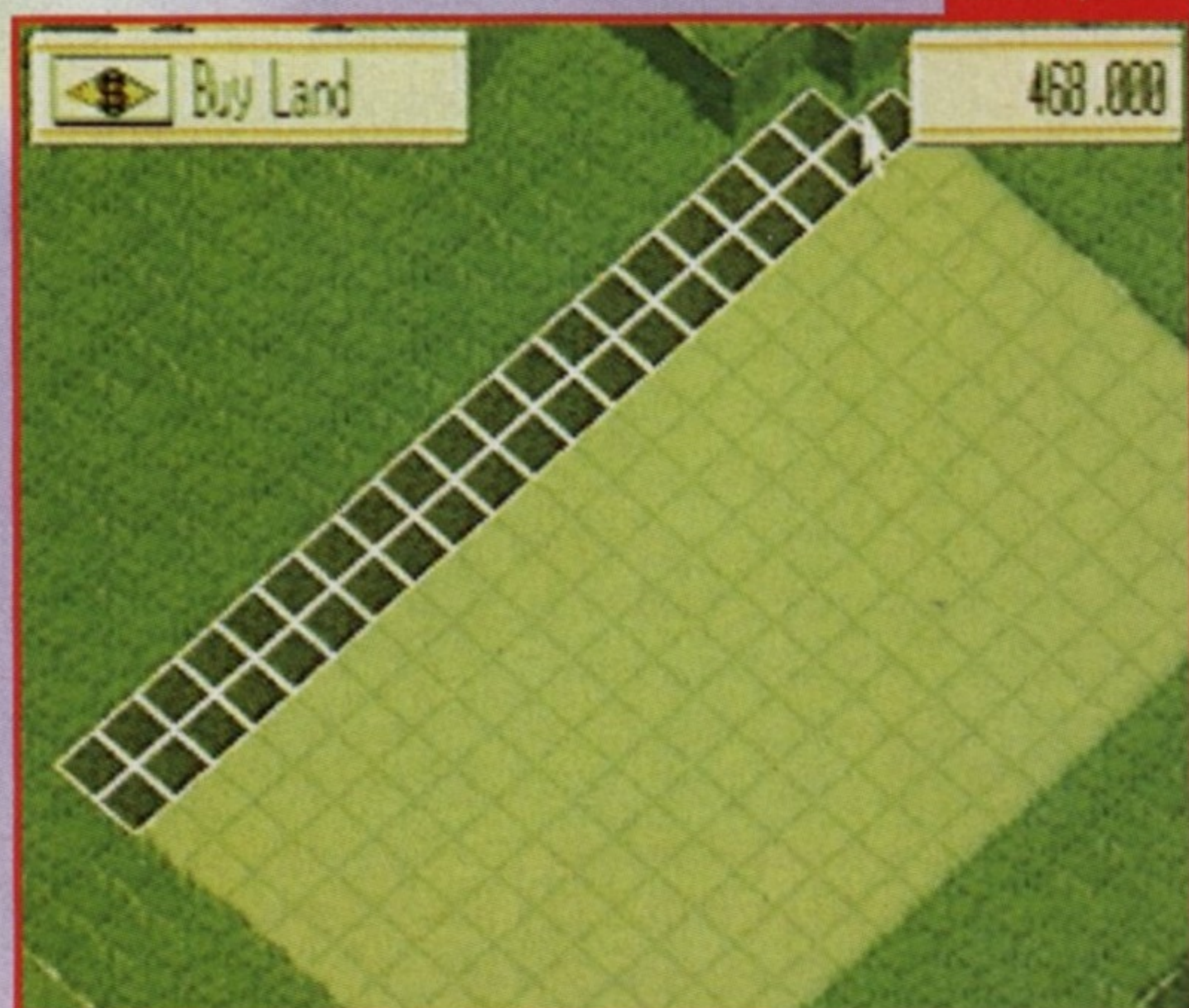


[ABOVE] This annoying bloke frequently appears to tell you where you can and cannot build, or that there aren't enough materials, or that the men have gone on strike – useless gits.

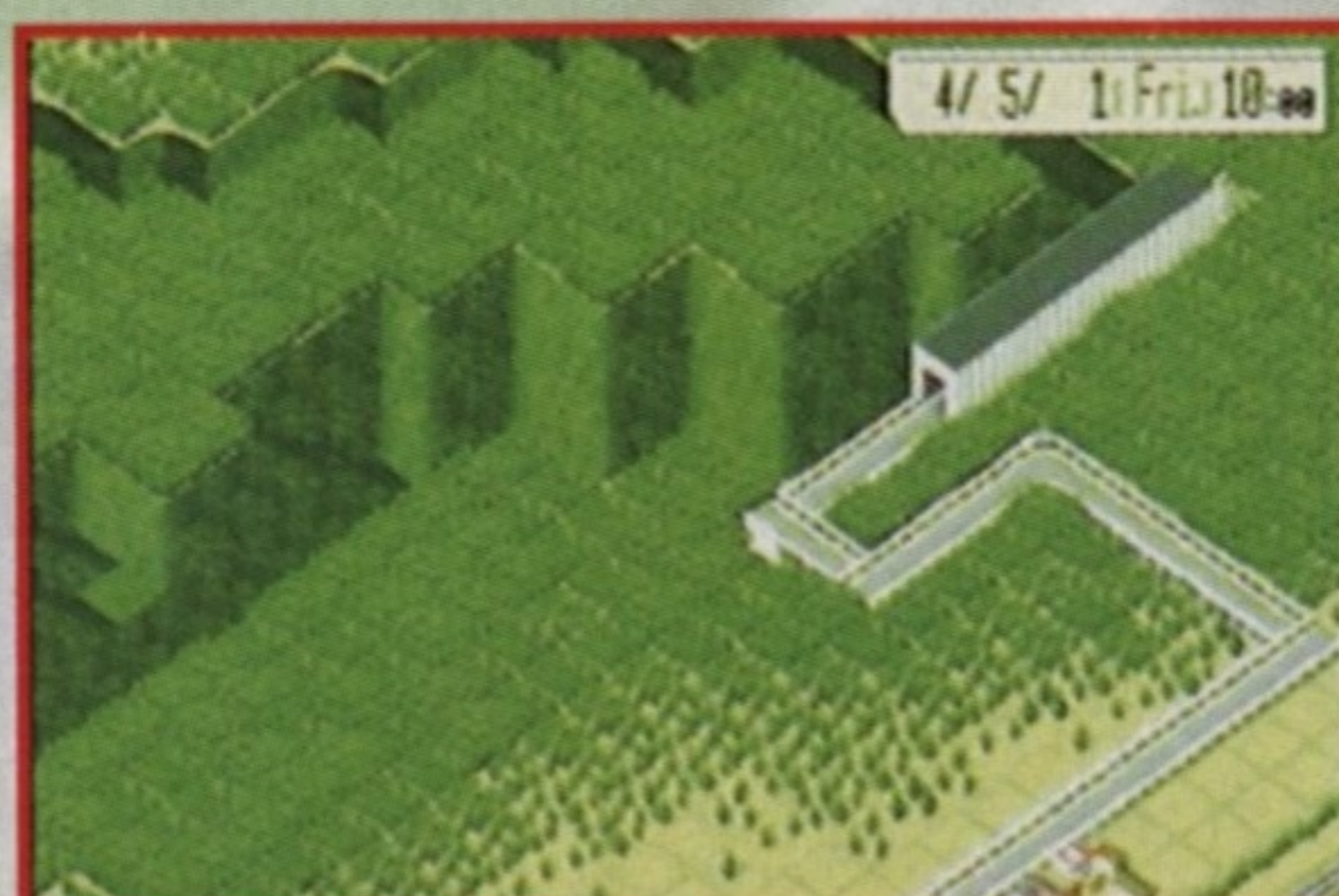
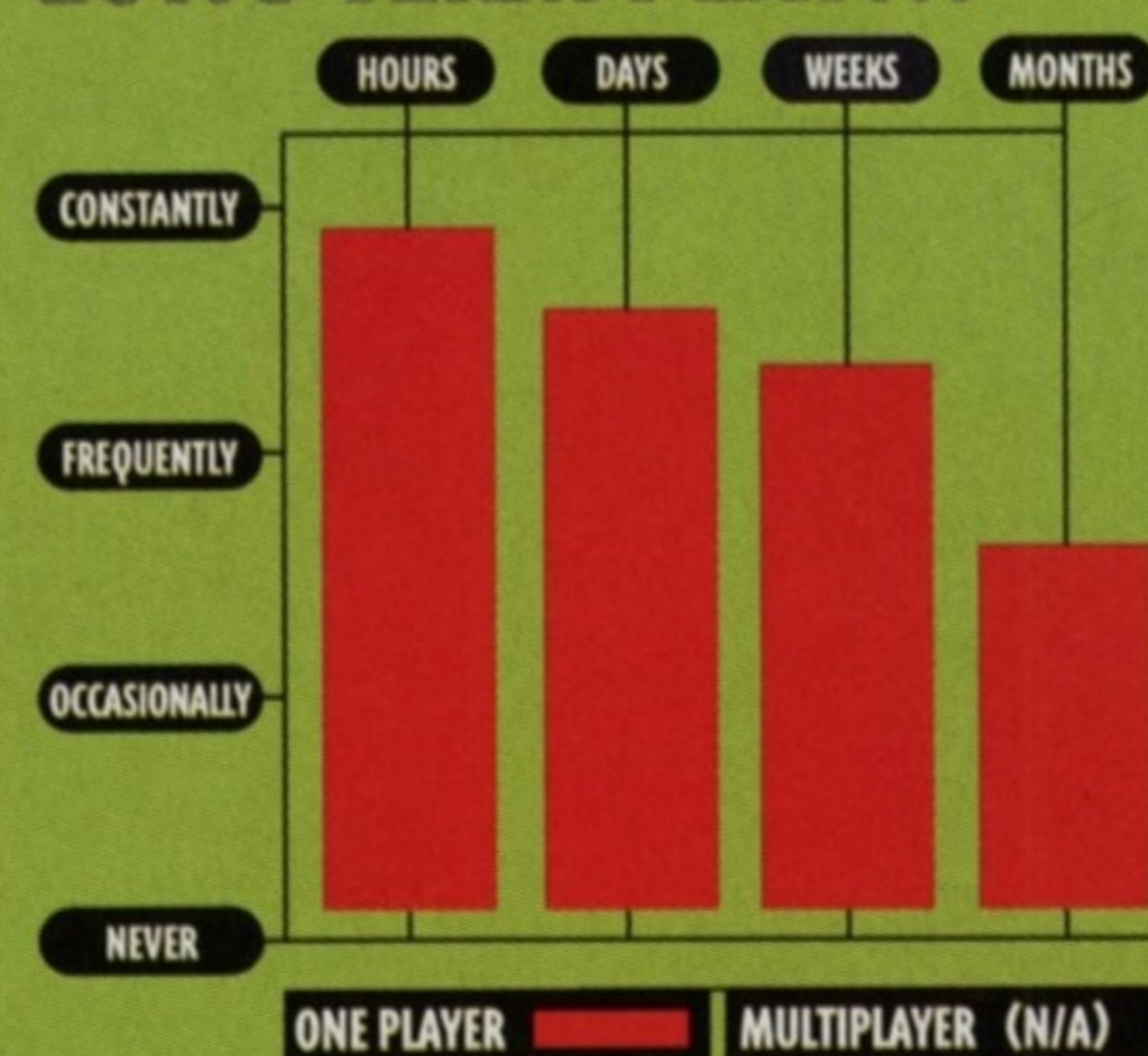
don't interfere with the serious task of building, but things are very slow and awkward to begin with because the task seems so daunting at first, despite the huge instruction book.

On the brighter side, those with patience longer than five minutes and a craving for architecture will appreciate the amount of detail that has gone into this game – in fact, *A-Train* is probably the most realistic and involving urban development sim on any console.

Saying that, *A-Train* could have been so much better if the developers had adopted a lighter touch rather than have been so heavy handed. The financial areas are, well, downright boring at times, and not everyone gets that excited about trains now do they? Overall, this offering is let down by the fact that it can get too complicated to be wholly enjoyable. Not bad, but in the end it's one for detail freaks only.



LONG TERM PLAY...



[ABOVE] Things get difficult as the land gets higher, as tunnels have to be built and houses cleared. Materials aren't always available and the foreman can be very awkward.



[ABOVE] The more out of reach areas could benefit if they are linked to the major cities, but just how much is it all gonna cost?

[BELOW] Choose the area of land you want and then start building! If only it was that simple.

PLAY

LOOKS
SOUNDS
GAMEPLAY
VALUE
CREATIVITY

PLAYED 62%

Interesting, but eventually anal

ALTERNATIVELY:

TRANSPORT TYCOON (OUT JULY)
SIM CITY 2000 (OUT AUGUST)

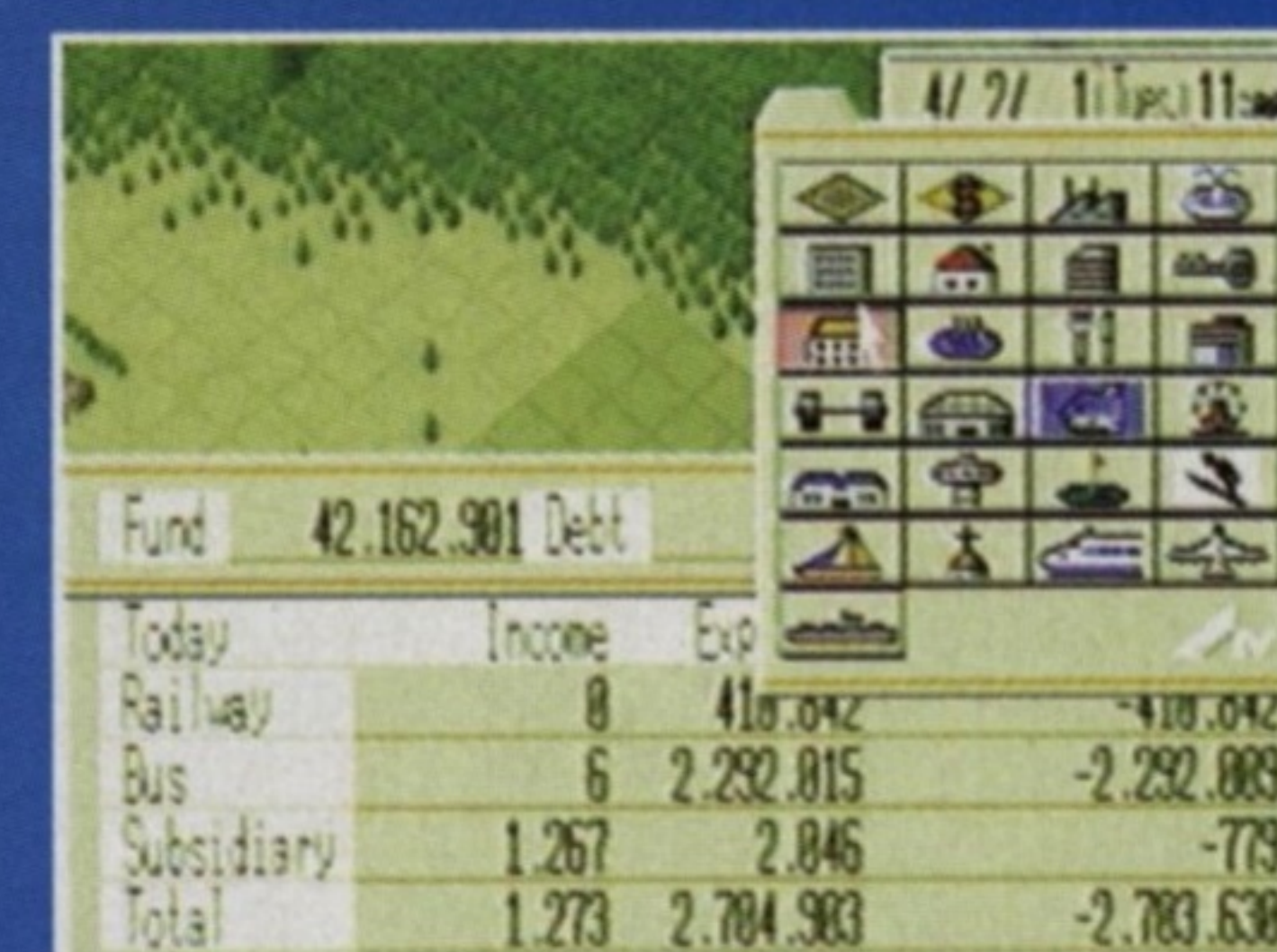
BUILDING THE BIG ONE

RIGHT, NOBODY WANTS TO BE STUCK WITH HAVING TO READ THE INSTRUCTION BOOKLET UNTIL THEY'RE TOO OLD TO PLAY THE GAME. SO, HERE ARE FIVE SIMPLE AND EASY STEPS TO BUILDING THE CITY OF YOUR DREAMS...

[1] GET ENOUGH MONEY – BEG, BORROW OR STEAL (A BANK LOAN USUALLY DOES THE TRICK) AND BUY THE RELEVANT LAND.



[2] GET MATERIALS AND LAY THE FOUNDATIONS – EXTRA MONEY MAY BE NEEDED HERE, SO ALWAYS CHECK YOUR SUPPLIES OF CASH BEFORE YOU START. REMEMBER, YOU ARE CHARGED FOR MATERIALS AND WILL BE TAXED HEAVILY.



[3] START BUILDING! CHOOSE FROM A HUGE SELECTION OF HOUSES, SKYSCRAPERS, TRAIN STATIONS, LEISURE FACILITIES OR FACTORIES.



[4] EXPAND YOUR CITY – BUILD EXTRA ROADS AND RAILWAYS SO THAT MORE PASSENGERS USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT. THIS WILL BRING IN MORE MONEY. YOU MIGHT WANT TO LAY OUT THE PRIMARY ROUTES FIRST IF IT'S ANY EASIER.



[5] CHECK THAT YOU HAVE ENOUGH CAPITAL – IF SO, YOU CAN LENGTHEN ROADS, RAIL TRACK AND INTRODUCE MORE LEISURE FACILITIES TO MAKE EVEN MORE MONEY. BIGGER BUS STOPS MEANS MORE FARE PAYING PASSENGERS!



A LA MODES!

It's NOT JUST PLATFORM LEVELS (THANK THE LORD) NO, CHEESY IS SPLIT UP INTO SECTIONS AND THE VIEWPOINTS SWITCH FREQUENTLY.



3-D MODE - THIS LINKS CHEESY TO THE NEXT LEVEL. WHAT A PITY THE CHEESY SPRITE ISN'T THIS KIND OF QUALITY.



MINE MODE - MINECART RIDING INDIANA JONES STYLE. POSSIBLY THE MOST COMPELLING PART OF THE GAME.



SURF MODE - A MOUSE SURFING ON A LEAF MAY NOT SOUND NORMAL, BUT THE SEWAGE PIPES PRESENT A REAL HAZARD.



UFO MODE - A WEIRD PART OF THE GAME WHERE CHEESY RIDES ON A SMALL FLYING SAUCER.



SIDE VIEW - THE NORMAL VIEW FOR MOST OF THE LEVELS, BUT THIS INCLUDES SOME ZOOMING IN/OUT TECHNIQUES.

CHEESY

THERE'S A GREAT FEELING OF ANTICIPATION IN THE PLAY OFFICE BECAUSE WE'VE A PLATFORMER TO REVIEW, SOMETHING OF A RARITY ON THE PLAYSTATION. NATURALLY, WE WERE ALL EXPECTING SOMETHING BIG...

Sad but true

PLAY INFORMATION

Publisher: Ocean
Customer support: 0161 832 6633
Price: £39.99
Release date: July



ONE PLAYER

PlayStation platform games have so far been a decidedly mixed bunch - with precious few characters or mascots that we, and the national media, can all identify with. Perhaps, we thought, *Cheesy* could rectify this problem, after all, the game is already featured on a Sky One kids TV show. Mind you, could you imagine advertising the association? "Be Cheesy on the PlayStation," "The PlayStation is Cheesy" and so on, and so forth. Well, after far too many hours of coke, junk food and sore thumbs, we've reached the decision that this *Cheesy* really does stinky... worse than two week old Wensleydale!

CHEESY EFFECTS

The central character of this platform game is, surprisingly enough, Cheesy the mouse, who has been captured by a mad scientist and thrown into a cage in his castle, presumably to be the subject of a terrible experiment. Cheesy manages to get out, and this is where he faces 30 levels in his bid to escape. From the pictures, you might be thinking that this is the bees knees as far as platform games go. True, there are the usual special effects, such as rotating and

scaled screens and the camera zooms in, but the levels don't exactly stand out, let alone keep the players interest. The way Cheesy moves around is pretty dodgy as well. The same old, tired platform formula with 3-D bits makes an unwelcome comeback, and it's short of innovation. Thankfully, there is a bit of variation introduced after every two levels in the form of three 3-D sub-games. The first of these sees the gamer guiding Cheesy, who's trapped in a runaway mine cart, through a series of winding tunnels avoiding obstacles on the rails (Like that bit in *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom*). Then there's a leaf to surf through sewer pipes, dodging sharks, and a UFO to ride through an attic, avoiding rafters. Rotating towers and bungee levels also add a bit of variety, but it's really all been done before. The sad truth is, that over simple though they are, these sections look a darn sight better and are more fun to play than the main action. Ridiculous!

MOUSE IN THE HOUSE

As the stages progress, Cheesy picks up weapons and power-ups, plus restart points which (temporarily) keep the your interest. But, to be honest, the gameplay sucks - trudging through near-empty backdrops (library, a kitchen, a lab, and a rooftop to name just a few) practically devoid of any challenge whilst collecting cheese and the odd power-up or extra life is not a recipe for a good platform game. Also, the rendered sequences are good enough to show that the programmers and artists have some talent, so why is the animation of the main sprite so disappointing?

VERY FA-MOUSE!

CUTE ISN'T HE? FAMOUS TOO. YES, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, CHEESY HAS ACTUALLY APPEARED ON TV, SKY TV APPARENTLY. HE APPEARS EVERY MORNING ON SKY ONE FOR A PROGRAMME CALLED *BOILED EGG AND SOLDIERS* IN ONE OF THOSE INTERACTIVE GAMES WHERE THE PLAYER AT HOME CONTROLS HIS MOVEMENTS BY PRESSING THE CORRESPONDING BUTTONS ON THE TELEPHONE. SHAME ABOUT THE GAME THOUGH...



Y

“The sub-games are more fun than the main action. Ridiculous!”

If the levels had been harder, hell, if they'd been anything much to do, and the sprites been better-looking, then this would have made for an A1 game. As it stands, *Cheesy* is just another failed 3-D platformer – it's main strength being three half decent sub-games. I won't even go into how childish and annoying the sound effects are.

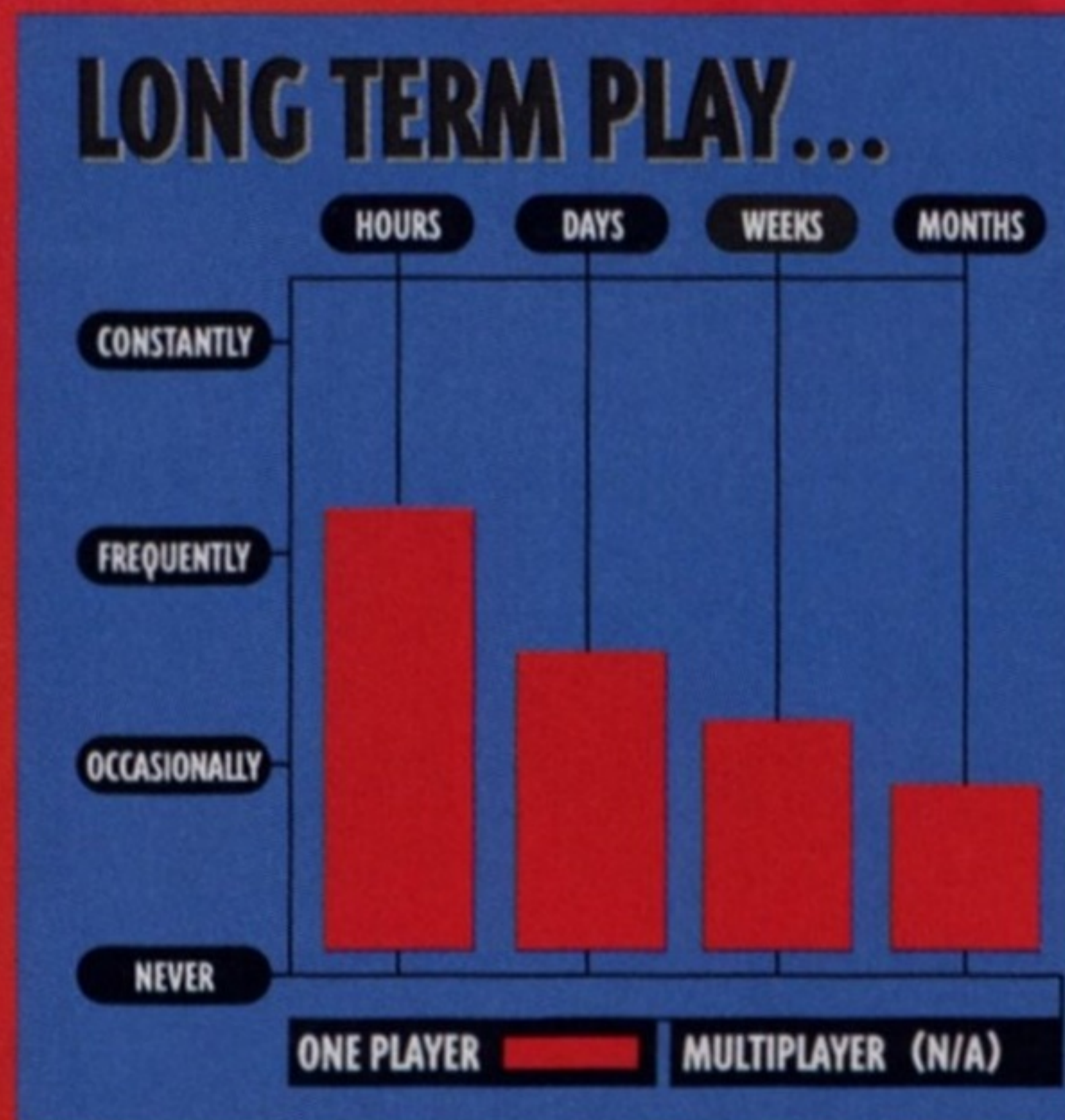
Nope, *Cheesy* is a big let down. The simple gameplay and the main character may appeal to younger gamers, but anyone else will find it a huge disappointment. Save your money folks, and let's just hope that *Crash Bandicoot* turns out better.



[ABOVE] A huge boss poses problems at the end of the rooftop stages. Use the spiders web as a trampoline and blast that dragon away!



[ABOVE] UFOs are annoying and frequent. Well, they are in this game anyway. They either pose an obstacle or hunt out Cheesy with their ray guns.



[ABOVE] The flames creep up the walls and Cheesy gets hot under the collar. Burn him, burn him! Oops, sorry...



[ABOVE] Cheesy is a bit of a daredevil, what with all that surfing and mine cart riding. To defeat this spider he indulges in a spot of bungee jumping on a strand of web!



[ABOVE] Who said that libraries were quiet and peaceful places? This one sees Cheesy having to climb over books and avoid weird insects in a desperate bid to escape a UFO that tracks him down!



PLAY

LOOKS	●●●●●●●●
SOUNDS	●●●●●●●●
GAMEPLAY	●●●●●●●●
VALUE	●●●●●●●●
CHALLENGE	●●●●●●●●

PLAYED 50%

Cheesy? Knob cheese more like!

ALTERNATIVELY:

RAYMAN (87%) ISSUE 1
CRASH BANDICOOT (OUT SEPTEMBER)

STATION MASTER

CHEATS • TIPS • LETTERS

MORE TIPS AND CHEATS THAN YOU CAN POSSIBLY DIGEST IN A MONTH (ALMOST). HANDY HINTS ON *RESIDENT EVIL*, ESSENTIAL CODES FOR *THUNDERHAWK 2* AND OF COURSE TWO STORMING GUIDES TO *DESCENT* AND *ADDIDAS POWER SOCCER*. WE'LL HAVE A MUCH BIGGER TIPS SECTION NEXT MONTH AND WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE FREE TIPS BOOK ON THE COVER OF THIS ISSUE. WE DO APPRECIATE THE STUFF YOU LOT SEND IN SO KEEP 'EM COMING TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS: *PLAY TIPS, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET BH1 2JS*.

REVOLUTION X

Rescue Aerosmith member

Yes, we know it's a game that makes all the cack Eighties games look fantastic, but we've been playing it for laughs and have come up with some advice on how to rescue a certain member of *Aerosmith* just in

case. Fans can achieve their dreams by rescuing Steven Tyler! In the room just before the *Aerosmith* concert stage, shoot the fish on the wall (which has CDs on). There is also a mirror in this room – shoot it and you should be transported to a catwalk, where Mr Tyler awaits rescue. Just think, *Aerosmith* will be eternally grateful to you...



NHL FACE OFF

Player Choice

Hold down L1, L2, R1, R2 and push every category level to 40, then bring it back up to 99. A ringing noise will indicate that the cheat has worked. Now, you should be able to choose any NHL player, and



receive 20 extra points to give you the chance of making an even better player on the "Create a Character" option.



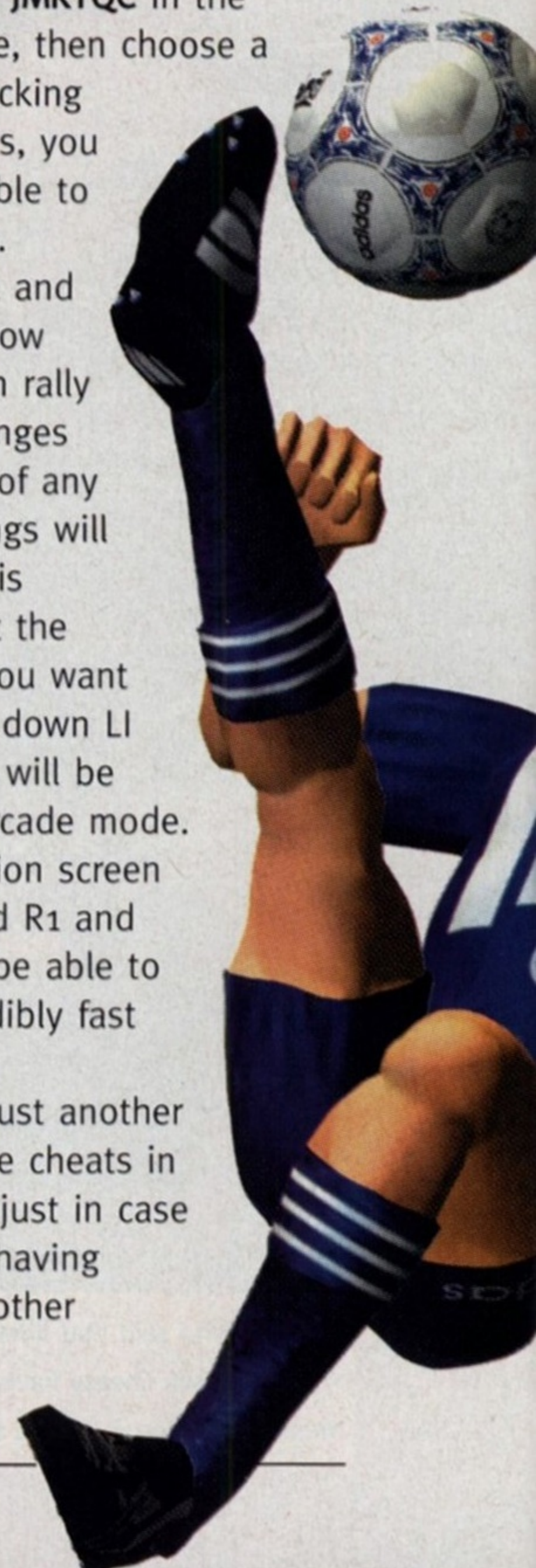
NEED FOR SPEED

Secret cars/Tracks

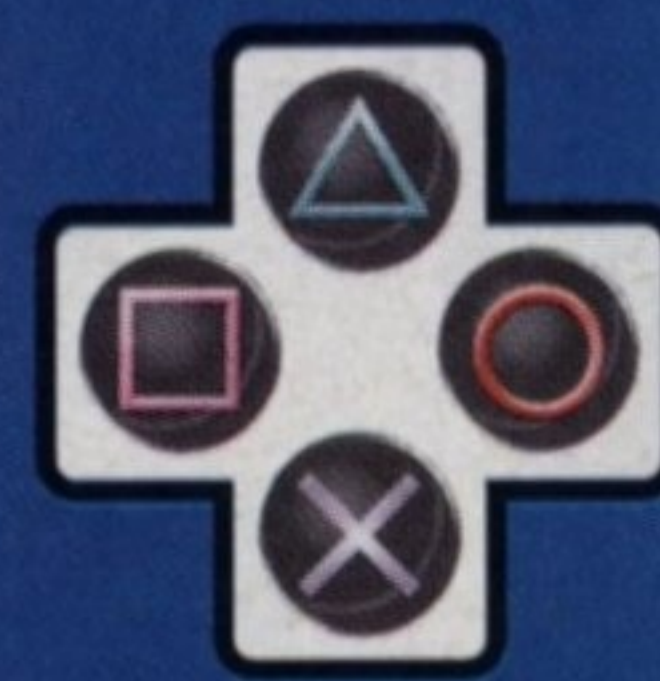
These tips came from Ian Sherwood in Banbury, cheers Ian.

Enter the code **JMKTQC** in the Tournament mode, then choose a single race. By flicking through the tracks, you should now be able to select Lost Vegas. Hold down L1, R1 and X – you should now be able to race in rally mode, which changes the road surface of any track. Rusty Springs will now become Oasis Springs. Highlight the number of laps you want to race and hold down L1 and R1. Now you will be able to race in Arcade mode. On the car selection screen hold down L1 and R1 and you should now be able to choose the incredibly fast Warrior car.

NOTE: This is just another way of getting the cheats in *Need For Speed*, just in case any of you were having trouble with the other methods printed last issue.



PLAY



Q&A

PROBLEMS PROBLEMS – SO MANY OF THEM AND SO LITTLE SPACE! IF YOU'VE GOT ANY GAME RELATED TROUBLES (THE DOG SLOBBERING ON YOUR PLAYSTATION AND FUSING IT ETC), SPECIFIC CHEATS THAT YOU WANT OR SIMPLY

QUESTIONS TO THE MYSTERY OF LIFE AND THE UNIVERSE THAT NEED ANSWERING, JUST WRITE TO THIS ADDRESS!: Q+A, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETERS ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET. BH1 2JS

Dear PLAY,

Congratulations on being one of the few magazines with a decent tips and cheats question section. I've been trying to find an answer to this question for ages:

My problem is, that after completing the playoffs on *Total NBA '96*, I get a sequence of buttons to press:

R1 L1 R1 L1 R2 L2 R2 L2

However, it doesn't say where to press these buttons or when. It would be extremely pleasing if you could answer my question because I don't know what it does. Please help!

David Stern, Blackpool

Okay David, this is a sequence of buttons which must be pressed (in that order) to activate a special cheat. First, select an Exhibition match and press Enter. Now highlight "Play Game" (don't press the button) and enter the code that you have been given. The words "ALLSTAR" should now appear underneath "Play Game." You should now be able to select a team of all the best basketball players around!

Dear Q + A,

Just a few questions that I am desperate for answers to:

1. If you leave *The Need For Speed* running through the demos, it shows two tracks. One is in the desert, the other with two massive humps with banked curves at the end. Is there a cheat to select them?
2. In issue five there is a mention of an extra car (the Warrior) for *NFS*. How do I select it?
3. In *Alien Trilogy*, I've got so far and I'm stuck! I've not yet got enough ammo in the shotgun. How about a cheat for unlimited ammo?

In *Wipeout* I've found that if you pause the game just before the countdown (make sure the music is set on Random) you can swap the game with a music CD, close the lid, unpause the game and then be able to listen to your favourite music, which echoes when you go through a tunnel. Make sure when you've finished a race that the *Wipeout* CD is placed back in, or the PlayStation won't be able to load up the next track.

James Finnigan, Warrington

1&2. I'm going to have to refer you to the top cheats for *Need For Speed* we printed over on the left there, James. There is a cheat to access Lost Vegas, the special hidden track, which also enables you to select the Warrior car.

3. As for *Alien Trilogy*, how about a cheat to give you infinite lives and ammo for all the weapons (all of which can be selected). Here we go...

Type in 1GOTP1NK8CIDBOOTSON as a password. The words "Cheats Activated" should now appear on the password screen. Exit the screen, then go back to it and there should be a cheats option, giving you infinite health, all the weapons and unlimited ammunition like you asked!

As for your little *Wipeout* discovery, we figured out that in the office ages ago, and it does work. As far as we know, it won't damage your PlayStation, but it would still be safer to use a personal stereo to listen to your favourite tunes whilst playing it. You can never be too careful with these delicate CDs. One minute they work, and the next they don't.

RESIDENT EVIL

Cheats

Yes, we know it isn't out yet, but we're printing these for our import users/readers. Don't worry, we won't be giving the game away completely!

Missile Launcher

Manage to complete the game in under three hours (remember that there are lots of different ways to complete the game) and your character will be rewarded with the previously unavailable missile launcher!

Sawn-off Shotgun

A fantastic little cheat here: on the first level (count the zombies in the

order that you encounter them) when you encounter the fifth zombie, kick or punch him. Walk past him when he's on the floor, but let him grab your leg. DO NOT smash its head, but shoot it with the shotgun. The head explodes, revealing a key. Use it to open the chest in the next room. Inside, you will find the Super sawn-off shotgun!

Closet Keys

Collect all the mansion keys, but don't get rid of them. This will give you the closet key. This gives your character access to a new suit of clothing, plus access to another room.



WARHAWK

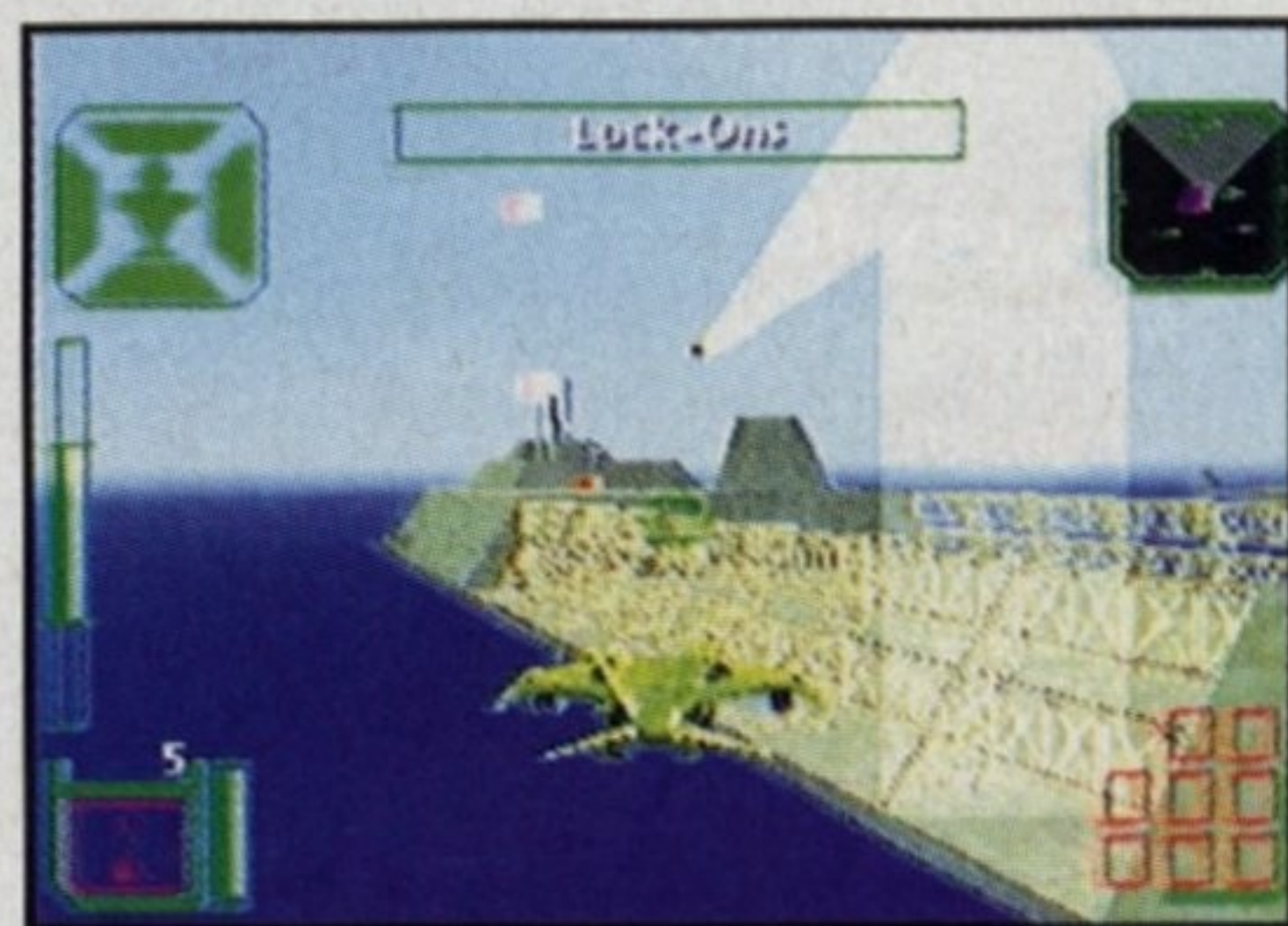
Cheats

We printed the codes for this hard hitting game back in issue six, but here's a little cheat too:

To get infinite weapons, press:

▲, ▲, ●, ▲, ■, ▲, ▲, X.

This will actually say "Access Denied" but you will find that none of the ammunition depletes.



ADIDAS POWER SOCCER

Saucy Sharon's Soccer Commentary

What a brilliant cheat this is! To hear a somewhat hilarious commentary from two of the North's finest female comedy voices, just do this:

Chose to play in Arcade mode, and whilst in the game press SELECT,

choose AUDIO and select COMMENTARY.

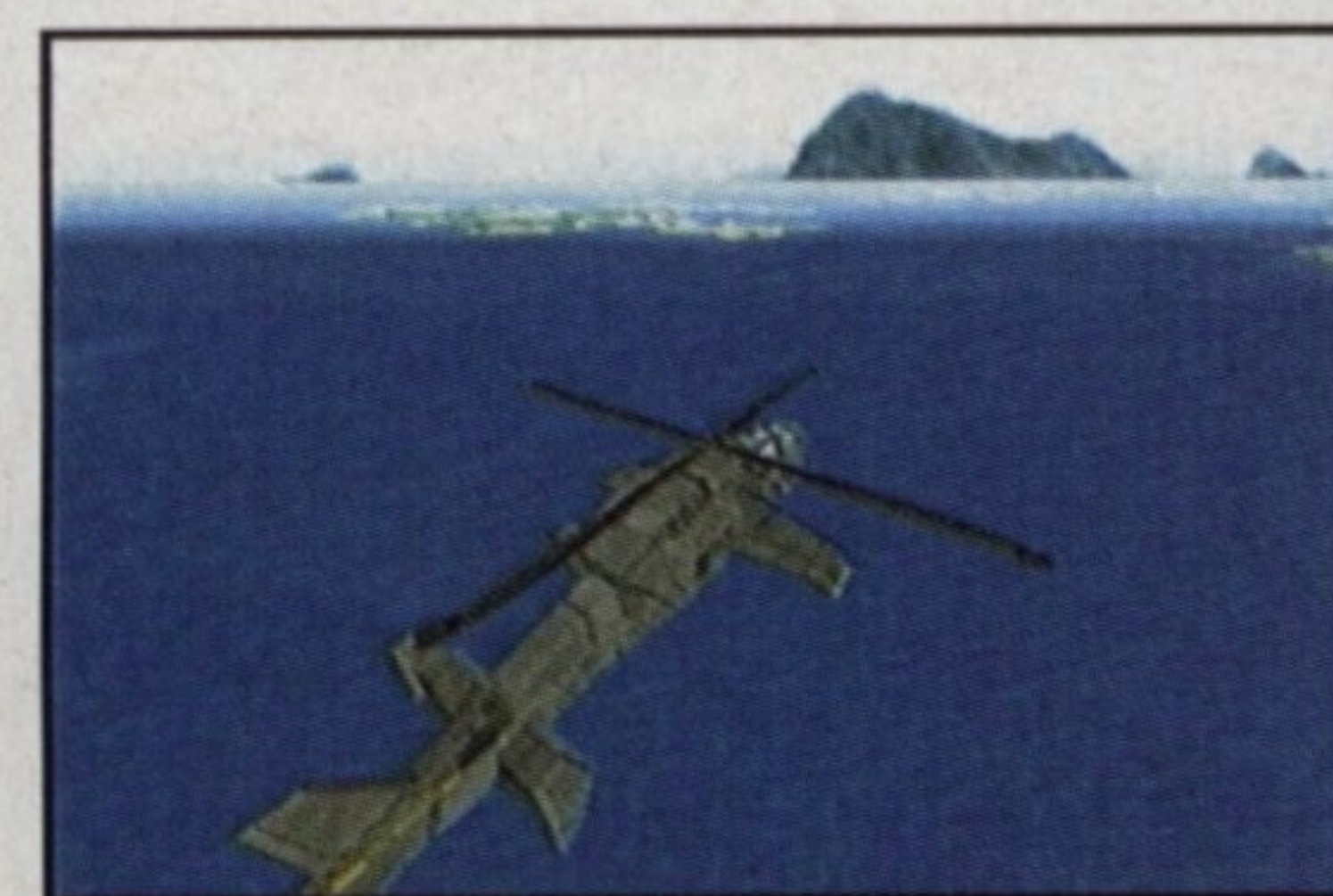
Press the ● and ■ buttons. You can now choose female commentary in English, French or German. You should hear some of the things they say, the dirty little minxes!

FIRESTORM THUNDERHAWK 2

Final South China Mission

Most of the codes were printed in issue seven, but not all were for the difficult South China Seas mission. Thanks to D Holt for sending us the last but one mission code for the South China Seas.

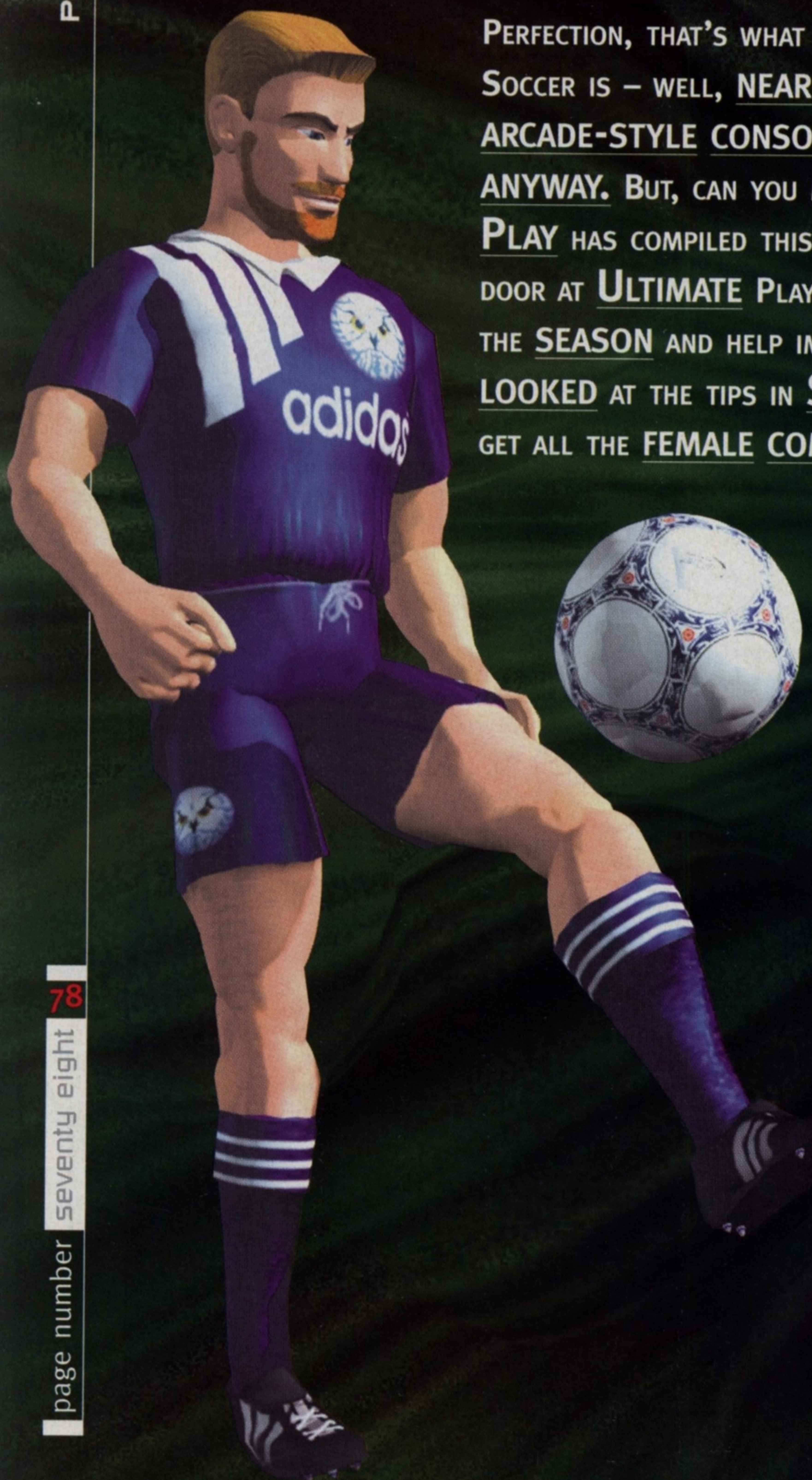
F J D K 4 o (Zero) U A 4 I 6 A D E I



ADIDAS POWER

SOLVED

PERFECTION, THAT'S WHAT ADIDAS POWER SOCCER IS – WELL, NEAR AS DAMMIT FOR AN ARCADE-STYLE CONSOLE FOOTBALL GAME, ANYWAY. BUT, CAN YOU MASTER IT? WELL, PLAY HAS COMPILED THIS GUIDE WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM THE BLOKES NEXT DOOR AT ULTIMATE PLAYER MAGAZINE, JUST SO WE CAN GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE SEASON AND HELP IMPROVE THOSE SOCCER SKILLS. IF YOU HAVEN'T LOOKED AT THE TIPS IN STATION MASTER YET, THERE'S A SMART CHEAT TO GET ALL THE FEMALE COMMENTARY IN THIS FAB FOOTIE GAME. GAME ON!



KICKIN'!

FREE KICKS

Aim a high pass at any player in the immediate area. Hold down the Shoot button whilst the ball is in the air. Your nearest team member should now header it into the onion bag!



CORNER KICKS

Aim for the player outside of the box. Pass the ball to him, then control him, running along the face of the goal towards the nearest post. Now all you have to do is boot the ball into the corner!



PENALTY KICKS

Choose the direction you want the ball to go in, then use half the power bar to kick the ball. As the ball leaves the ground, press the after touch button to send the goalkeeper off balance.

FORMATIONS

4-4-2

The classic formation, used at one time or another by all the best teams and one that never fails. No problems with defence here.

4-3-3

This is a pretty strong, evenly spread formation, again with strong defence but with an equally deadly line of attack.

5-3-2

A formation with the strongest defence, but it's difficult to actually score many goals with so many players pushed to the back.



POWER SOCCER

JOYPAD CONTROLS

Up – Forward
Down – Backward
Right – Right
Left – Left
× – Tackle/Low Pass
● – Rough Tackle/Pass
▲ – Avoid Tackle
■ – Rough Tackle/High pass
L1/L2 – After touch
R1/R2 – Change Player

3-6-1

This is undoubtedly one of the strangest formations, ever. The midfield is well defended, but it only leaves one solitary striker up front to face the rough stuff. One for the very brave, or very foolish.

3-5-2

Like the classic 4-4-2 formation, this one is fairly well spread out but with a strong midfield. Try out any of these formations and you should have no problems.



SOCCER SPECIALITIES

Kicking and slide tackles aren't good enough in this game – now it's time to get dirty and use some special moves that'll have the goalie handing in his notice!

BACK HEEL

Run towards their defenders like a madman and then leave them standing there by back-heeling the ball behind to your nearest team player. Press ■ and × to pull it off.

SPECIAL KICK – THE PREDATOR SHOT

Once the goal is in booting range, press × and ▲ to unleash the power of this net shredding shot!



BACK FLICK

To avoid a leg-breaking tackle, flip the ball over your head by pressing ▲ and ●.



BICYCLE KICK

This is one of the most powerful and effective kicks around, allowing you to score from miles away if done correctly. Try this by combining × and ▲.

PLAYING DIRTY – THE HAND MOVE!

This move had Diego Maradona all over the front covers after the World Cup in '86 and raised a storm of protest. You can perform this when the ref isn't looking to get a sneaky goal in!

LOW BALLS

DIVING HEADERS

This is a fantastic move for intercepting a low ball – press × and ▲ to smash the ball towards the goal!

MEGA VOLLEYS

This move passes the ball along

the pitch to another of your teams players, who can volley it at the goal. Hold down these buttons as soon as the ball is passed: ▲ and ●.



TWO HANDED SHOVE

Aren't fouls just great? This dirty move won't make you any friends though! Press ▲ and ● to do some damage.

MEGA RUN

In almost any sport, speed is essential, and this can be used at any time during a match. Each player has a limited amount of power, so use this sparingly. Quicken up by employing ■ and ●.



WANT EVEN MORE? TAKE A GANDER AT ISSUE TWO OF ULTIMATE PLAYER, OUT NOW!

JUGGLING!

One of the best moves in the game, this enables your player to bounce the ball from one foot to the other, then on each knee, and then boot it at a flying pace towards the net. This move is difficult to perfect and you'll need some space! Press ■ and × for this one.

HIGH BALLS

HEADER

Good timing is needed for this – press and hold ■ or ●.



HINTS AND ADVICE

Watch the goalkeeper carefully as he's about to throw the ball out. Keep the power shot buttons held down, so when the ball goes towards one of the oppositions players, you'll be able to rush in and have a chance of getting early possession of the ball.

The Mega Run can be used to get as far away from the goalie as possible. He tries to get the ball off you. Just turn around and boot it – the goal will be open and you'll score an easy goal!

Press the High Pass button to boot the ball towards the goal when all your players are in the same half. The goalie will rush to catch it, but it should go over his head into the net!



DESCENT

SOLVED

YOU'VE BEEN **BEGGING** FOR ADVICE, **MAPS**, **CHEATS** OR ANYTHING TO **HELP** OUT WITH THE LETTERBOXED BUT HIGHLY **PLAYABLE** *DESCENT* (85% IN ISSUE SIX), SO HERE IT IS. **ADMITTEDLY**, IT'S A **TOUGH** BUGGER TO COPE WITH, BUT THROUGH **BLOOD**, SWEAT, AND A FEW **TEARS** WE'VE MANAGED TO COMPILE THESE **HANDY** LEVEL **MAPS**, SOME VERY **HELPFUL** CHEATS AND A BUNCH OF USEFUL SNIPPETS OF **HINTS** AND ADVICE TO HELP YOU GET ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

STICK WITH US AND YOU'LL **SOON** BE REACHING THE TOP WITH **DESCENT!** BOOM-BOOM. SHOULD YOU **HAPPEN** TO FIND ANY OTHER CHEATS, **DON'T** HESITATE TO WRITE IN OR E-MAIL US (ADDRESSES ARE GIVEN ON THE BACK PAGE).

STEADY AS SHE GOES

BE AWARE

Always fire whilst you're moving, and that way nothing will be able to ambush or catch you unawares. Try not to stand still and fire at a target just because it seems easier. Also, search around, remember, the more places you explore, the more icons and power-ups you are likely to find!



PERFECT AIMING

Use the Vulcan Cannon and you won't have any problems with aiming and blasting away at any target. The Fusion Cannon is another good choice. Fly

backwards if you aren't sure what is behind, and that way you will be more aware of what's around.



CLOAKING DEVICE

This is an *extremely* helpful icon to pick up. Use the cloak to literally sneak up on enemy robots. Stick to dark areas where the dumb robots won't be alerted to your presence.



USE YOUR EARS!

It's helpful to have the sound turned up higher than usual when

playing. By doing this, you'll be able to hear the approaching enemy robots and also hear the firing of lasers (if you've got really good hearing!)

RUN AWAY, RUN AWAY!

There's no point in shooting it out if the odds are against you, and there's no harm in retreating either, so back off if everything gets too much!

YOU'VE BEEN FLAMED!

Try and force your foe into the lava if all else seems hopeless. This can be difficult as you lose lots of energy on contact with the lava, but it's no problem if you have the Invincibility cheat running! Voilà – instant crispy robots!



MISSILE PROBLEMS?

If you're a really good marksman, you can try to shoot down the incoming heat-seeking missiles. It becomes very difficult to avoid missiles seeing, as though they are so fast. If you are unsure of what lies in, say, the next room or corridor, use heat-seeking missiles to clear away any unwanted presence!



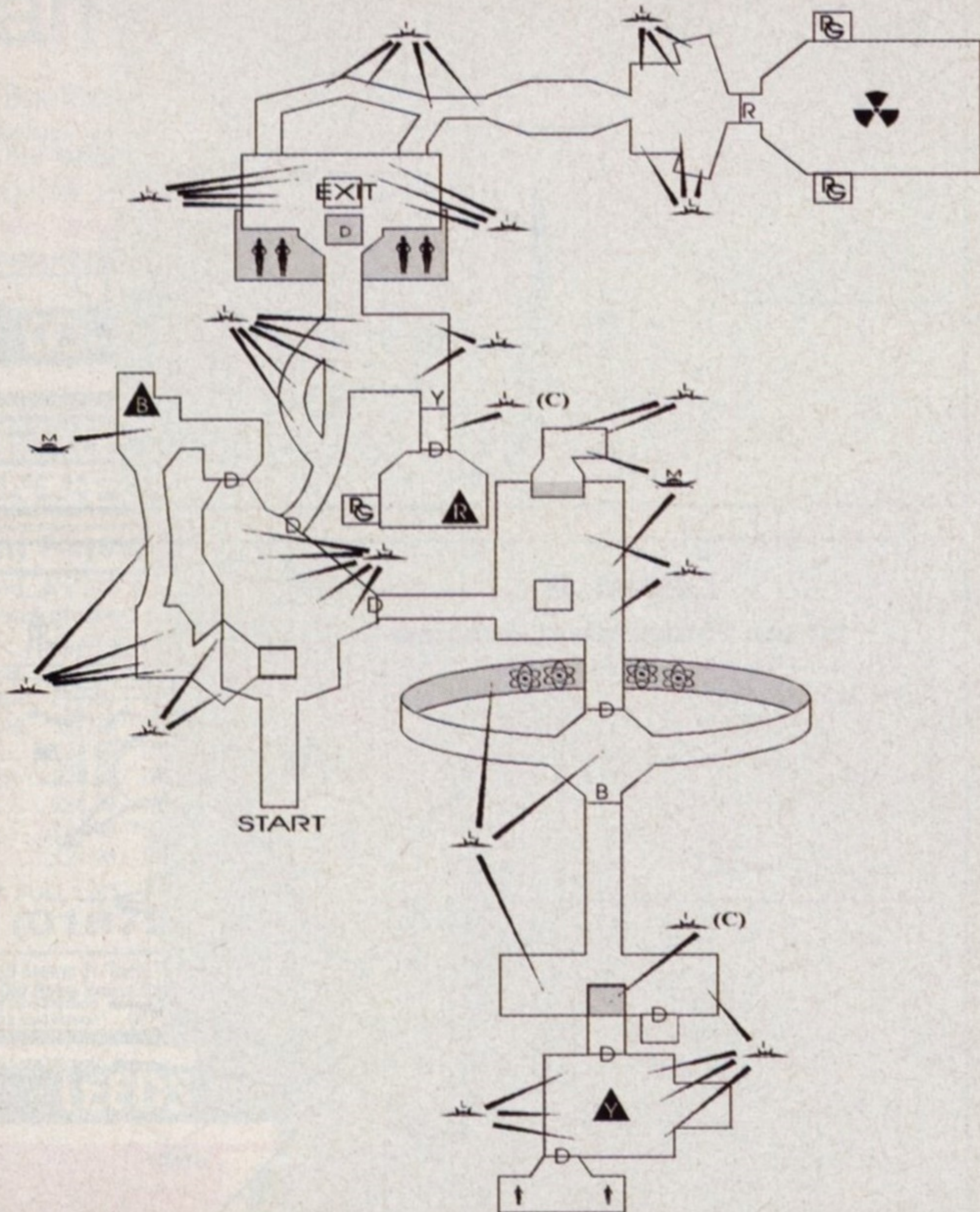
WHEN ALL HOPE IS LOST

Bombarding enemies with various bombs works well too. Nudge them into the lava. Remember, waltzing into a previously unexplored room is *not* a good idea (you'll most definitely be ambushed). You can shoot down most doors with even your weakest weapons, so always be careful and proceed with caution!

CARTOGRAPHERS 'R' US

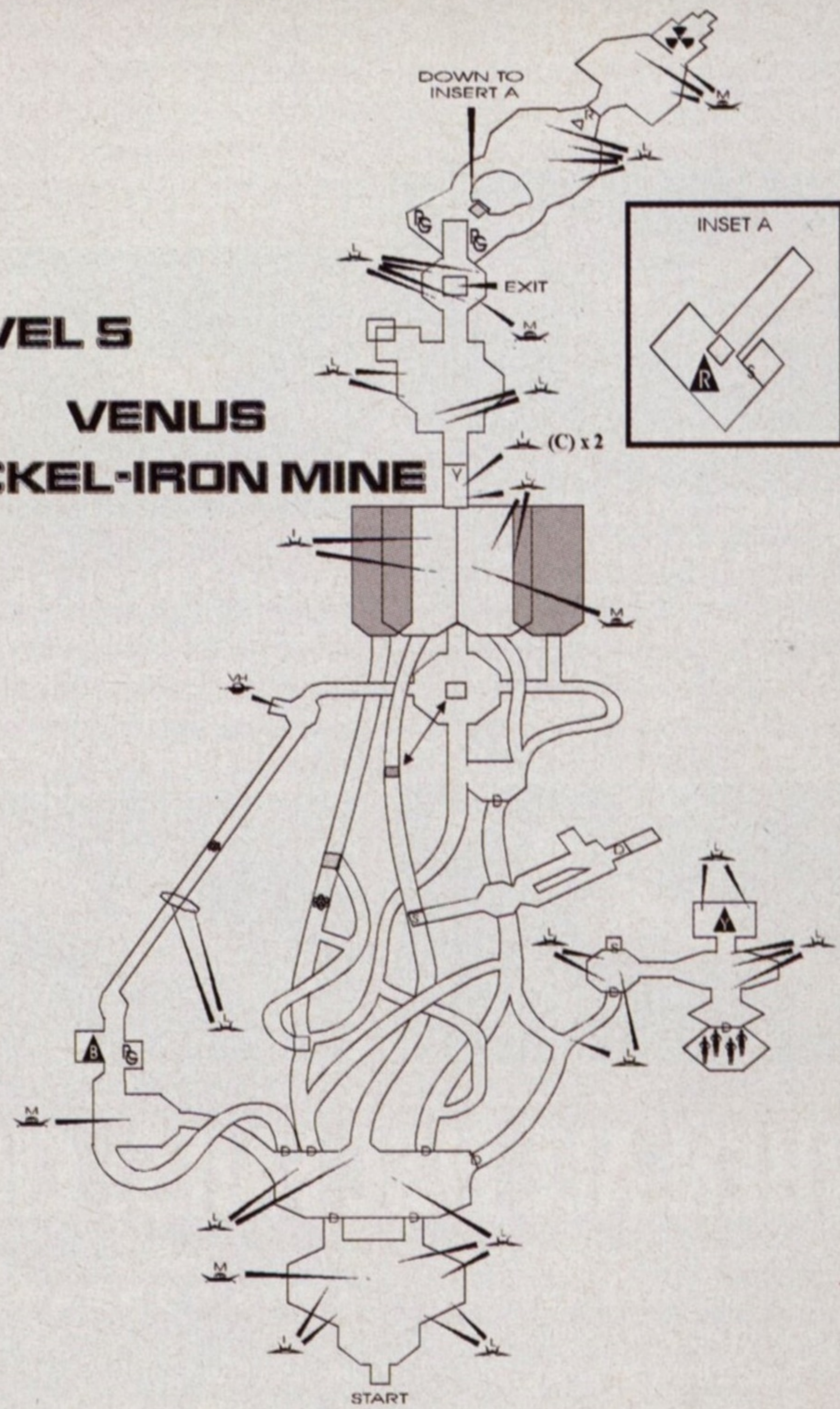
NOT QUITE SURE HOW TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND? DON'T FRET, HERE'S SOME EARLY BLUEPRINTS TO AID YOU IN YOUR SEEK & DESTROY MISSIONS. OBJECT KEY ON PAGE 82.

LEVEL 4 VENUS ATMOSPHERE LAB



LEVEL 5

VENUS NICKEL-IRON MINE



YOU'RE DEAD, YOU ARE

LASER

The Laser is the bog standard, run-of-the-mill weapon that does the job, but it's much more useful to have the more powerful death-delivering objects at hand. You never know what could be round the next corner!



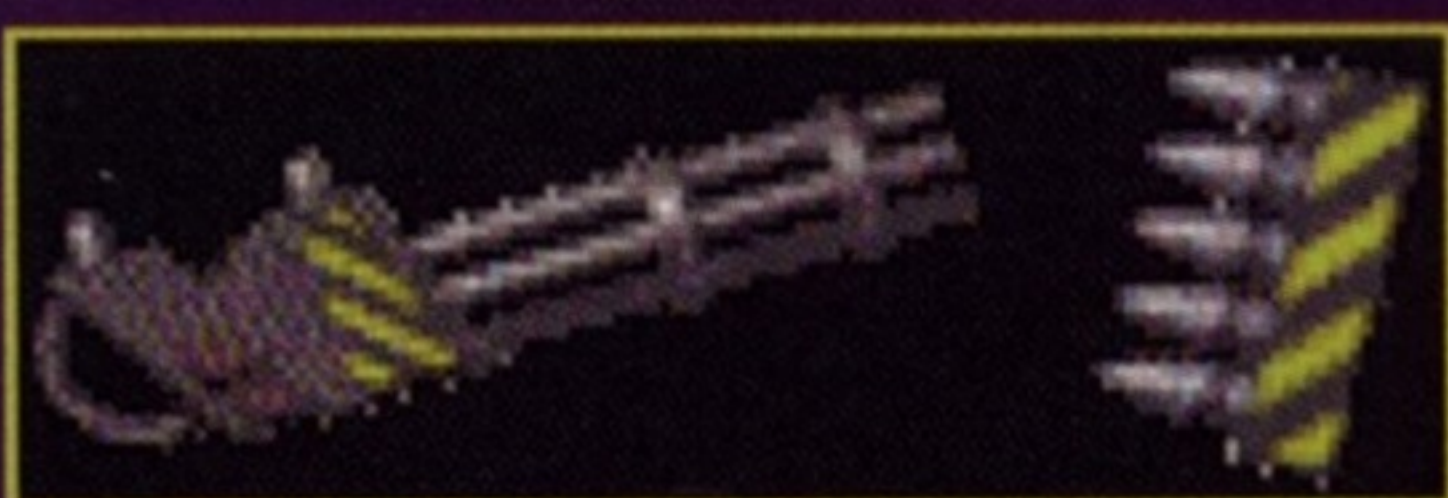
SPREADFIRE CANNON

Excellent for short-range targets is the Spreadfire Cannon. Again, use this on groups of enemies or those who keep moving left to right.



VULCAN CANNON

Use this one sparingly because the ammunition is limited and quickly depleted. The Vulcan Cannon is very useful and fires its ammo out at a rapid rate, and is therefore very effective.

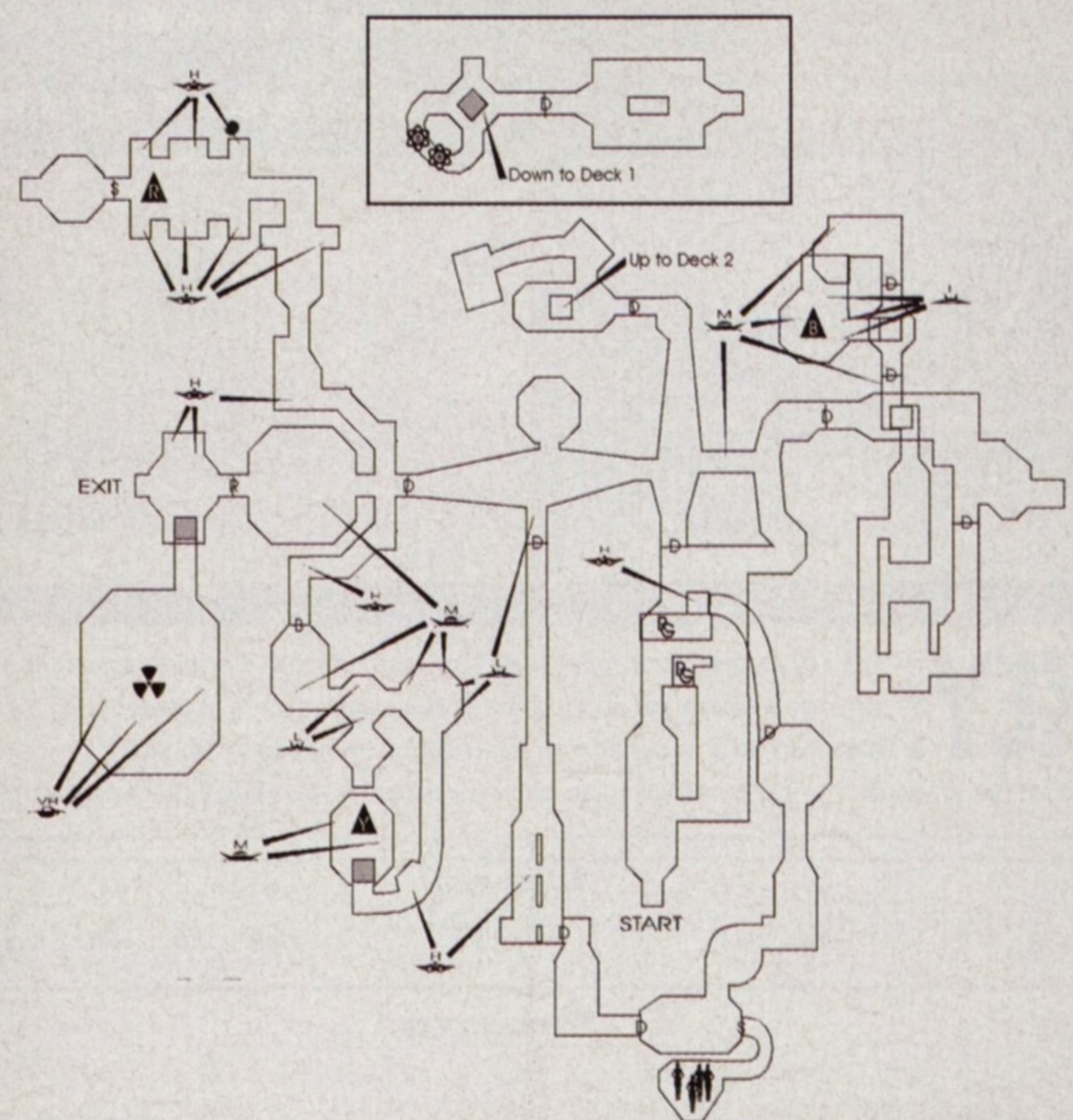


PLASMA CANNON

The daddy of all weapons. Our pal the Plasma Cannon is an incredibly powerful gun which does the job perfectly! It inflicts terrible damage and is probably the most useful of all in the game.



LEVEL 6 - MERCURY SOLAR LAB



FUSION CANNON

The Fusion Cannon is another fantastic weapon but it uses so much energy that you have to only use it when it's absolutely necessary.



HOMING MISSILE

Use Homing Missiles on those incredibly annoying enemies who constantly move around and present a very difficult target. These are probably your best bet for these situations!



PROXIMITY BOMB

Dropping Proximity Bombs will get rid of any unwanted gits and pave a clear way ahead. If it looks like the odds are overwhelming, detonate one – you just might have a chance of clearing your way through!



MEGA MISSILES

Mega Missiles produce enormous explosions, so *never* stand near to a wall or solid object because you will be destroyed by the explosion!



WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, CHEAT

Please note: all these cheats have been tried and tested. *Don't* pause the game to enter them, just leave the controls alone and press the relevant buttons whilst the game is still playing. The cheat message will appear at the top of the screen.

All keys: ■×●▲×▲▲×▲×▲×

NOTE: You must exit the game after entering the following code:



[ABOVE] All Keys

Access all levels:

▲■▲▲●●■▲●■

Invincibility:

■▲●■▲●●■▲■×

Mega wowie zowie:

▲■●×▲■×▲■×●▲

10 lives, mega wowie zowie, all levels:

▲×■▲●●■▲■●×

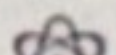
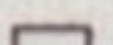
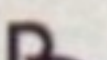
Turbo: ■▲●■●×■×●▲■×



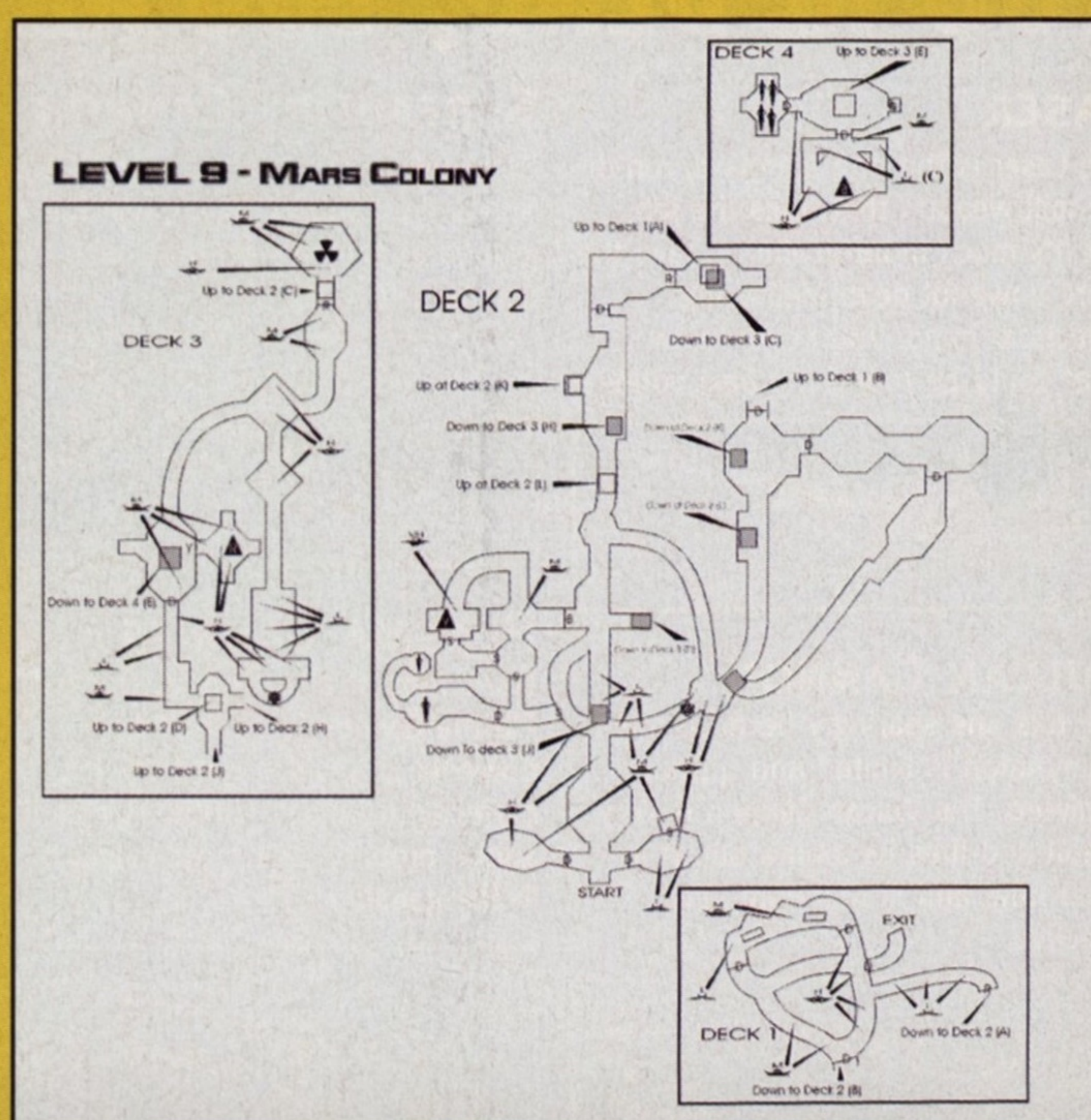
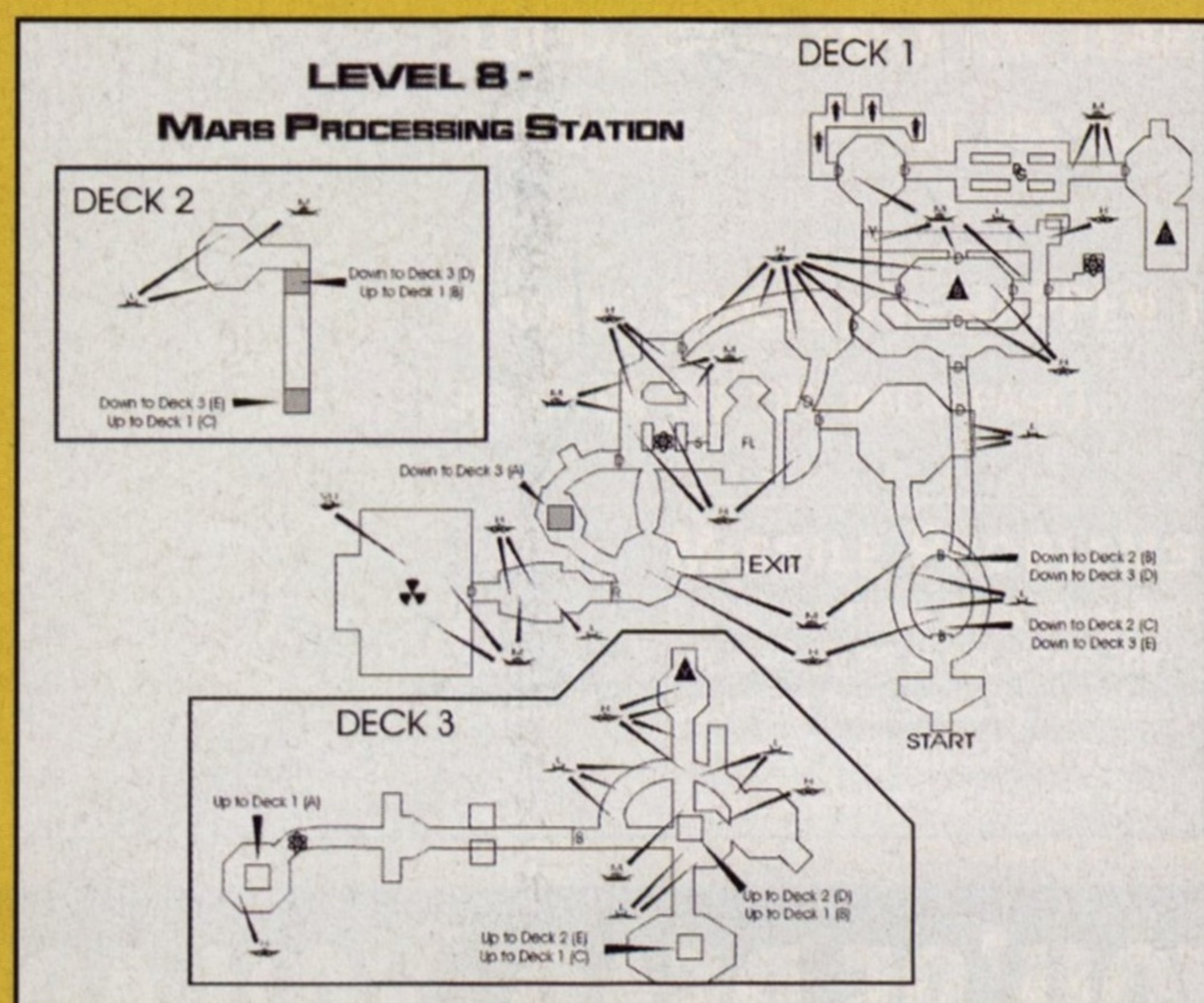
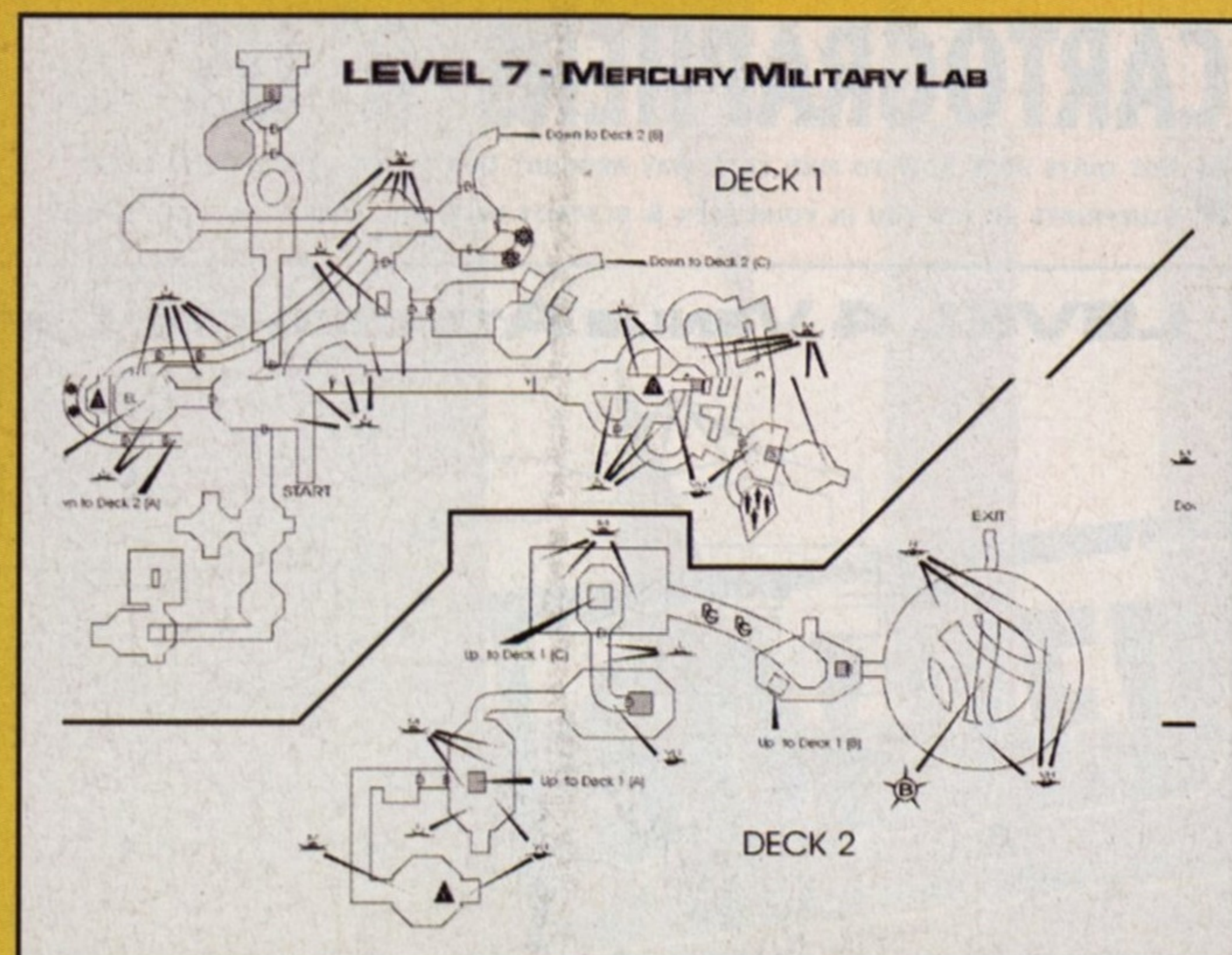
[ABOVE] Turbo

KEY:

THE LEVELS ARE HUGE, DARK AND YOU JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT COULD BE LURKING AROUND THE NEXT CORNER. THANKFULLY, WE'VE NABBED THIS BRILLIANT KEY, SHOWING THE POSITION OF POWER-UPS AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, WHERE THE ENEMY ROBOTS ARE AND HOW MUCH OF A THREAT THEY POSE. ENJOY!

LEGEND												
												
Power	Reactor	Tunnel Down	Tunnel Up	Robot Generator	Red Door	Blue Door	Yellow Door	Secret Door	Blue Key	Yellow Key	Red Key	Hostages

ROBOTS						
						
Cloaked	Amount	Low Threat	Medium Threat	High Threat	Very High Threat	Boss



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VALUE + QUALITY

BREATH



[ABOVE] Impressive isn't it. *Wipeout 2097* (just call it *Wipeout 2* for gawd's sake!) struts its stuff.



[ABOVE] The lighting effects are now flared to give a sensation of speed, or it's a bad photo...

It's easier this

time. Right, that's the main concern over *Wipeout 2*, sorry *Wipeout 2097*, dealt with, so now settle back and enjoy a rapturous ride. If waiting for *Tekken 2* and *Resident Evil* doesn't have you gnawing your right leg off in anticipation, how does the prospect of a bigger, better, faster, and above all, easier sequel to *Wipeout*, the bizarrely-named *Wipeout 2097* sound? It's going to be one of the most eagerly awaited PlayStation releases for the rest of this year, you can bet your bottom dollar on that.

FAST 'N' FLUID

The original *Wipeout* was a massive hit when the PlayStation was first released, claiming PLAY classic status thanks to its silky smooth visuals, incredible speed and real addictive qualities. Although some would argue it was a mite too hard to be truly addictive. The sequel is destined to hit the PlayStation and it's bigger and better than ever before. Where do we start? How about the utterly fantastic graphics that have improved spectacularly over the original?

At first glance, it's clear that the backdrops are much more detailed, even including animations such as a monorail train moving across a city late at night.



[ABOVE] Gameplay has happily been vastly improved over the original game. It's now actually fun to play!

SUPERSONIC STYLE

Wipeout was the first racer to fully exploit the power of PlayStation, achieving gut-wrenching speeds that no other game could achieve, with an admirable degree of difficulty compared with some games released since then. Now it seems even quicker, and this is 50% complete remember. The shear rate of knots experienced as your hover racer roars through tunnels and round tight corners will make your eyes pop out. Whereas the original allowed you to race against and fire at another opponent on the same track, *Wipeout 2097* will allow up to 15 ships to race on the same track at the same time.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: *Wipeout 2097*
Publisher: Psygnosis
% Complete: 50%
Release Date: October '96



[ABOVE] The handling has been tweaked so that the hover ships respond to the controls quicker and don't crash as much.

TAKING

WIPEOUT 2



[ABOVE] *Wipeout 2097* boasts far more weapons and they're easier to use as well.

Wipeout2097 has been designed with an arcade feel in mind, so it'll be player friendly, although the control method that distinguished *Wipeout* from any other racer will be just as sensitive as it was last time.

The entire race structure has been enhanced. To start off, there are now 12 hover ships to choose from, each with differing speeds and handling. The tracks are now

much longer and check points have been included for each race. A pit stop mode has now been thrown in, presumably to repair any damage sustained by weapons from the other hover racers, which brings us finally to the weapons. One of the great things about *Wipeout* was the ability to screw up particularly fast opponents, or at least delay them with a well timed heat-seeking missile. Far more weapons will be available for this stunning sequel, including thunder bombs that literally shake the track, to Plasma Bolts that have a deadly effect on the unfortunate racer who gets in your sights. So, *Wipeout* is back and the competition should start quaking. In fact, I'll stake my dad's pension that this game will be on everybody's wish list come October.



[ABOVE] It doesn't get much better than this. Shooting over the crest of a hill you are suddenly aware of a massive monorail train accelerating past. Animated objects during the race – not bad!



[ABOVE] Three difficulty levels ensure long term challenge although it's still a two player game.



[ABOVE] High resolution texture maps have been utilised to remove the blocky track effect close up.



[ABOVE] TO MAKE THINGS EASIER, ADJUST THE COURT SURFACE. ON HARD, THE BALL WILL BOUNCE MORE, BUT THE GRASS ON CARPET SURFACES WILL SLOW THINGS UP A TREAT, SO THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE RUSHING INTO THINGS!



[ABOVE] CHOOSE FROM ANY OF THESE STRANGE LOOKING CHARACTERS AND LOOK AT THEIR STATS CAREFULLY. SOME ARE SLOW, BUT OTHERS HAVE A MEAN BACKHAND, WHILST OTHERS ARE JUST GOOD ALL-ROUNDERS.



[ABOVE] ONCE THAT'S OUT OF THE WAY, CHOOSE THE VENUE FOR THE MATCH, RANGING FROM EXOTIC PLACES SUCH AS NEW YORK, FIJI, JAPAN, OR IN AN INDOOR COURT. EACH LOCATIONS FEATURES ATMOSPHERIC GRAPHICS AND ANIMATIONS.

DELUCK!

HOBSON'S CHOICE

CONDITIONS CAN AFFECT THE COURSE OF ANY GAME OF TENNIS. GET A HEAD START ON YOUR OPPONENT BY SETTING THINGS UP THE WAY YOU WANT THEM.

Hooray! It's

summer and that can only mean one thing – tennis! Not forgetting the ice cream and strawberries, of course. PlayStation

owners will soon be able to get a slice of that summer tennis action courtesy of Acclaim's *V-Tennis*.

First impressions are good – every option you'd expect is available, including different camera viewpoints (nine), a selection of players (16) rated in different abilities (scored out of 16 for service, forehand, backhand, footwork, sprinting speed) and different stadiums to play in. Two of these venues are the rather generic-sounding Stadium and Indoor, whilst others provide different backdrops (Japan, Fiji, Kilauea and New York), but they don't seem to affect actual gameplay at all. Finally, there's the choice of hard, lawn, clay (and if played Indoor), carpet surfaces to enjoy.

COURT TV

It has to be said, that the representation of the characters in *V-Tennis* is super smooth. They also feel comfortable to control, look (fairly) realistic and are nice and responsive. Things have come a long way since the old eight-bit tennis games, and no mistake.

The courts also look good, complete with score screens and cheering crowds, and there are approximately nine different ways of watching the action. These different views move the TV camera closer to the players, or further back, and even way up high, although one view

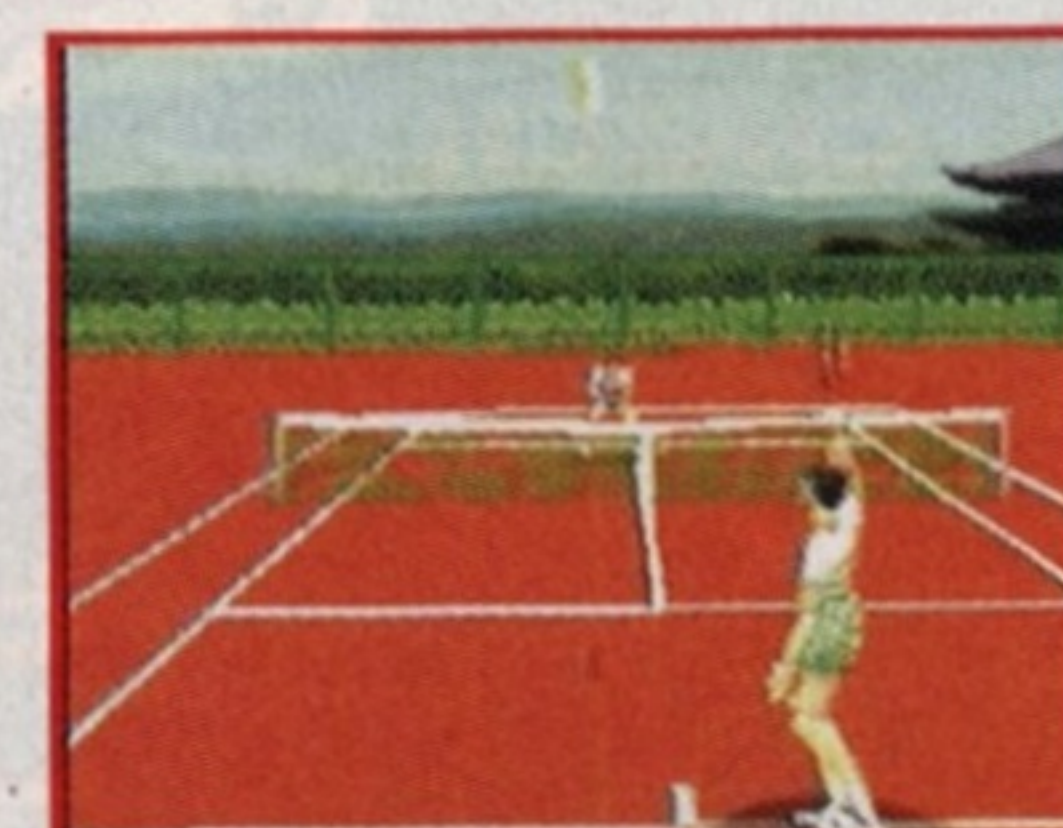
V-TENNIS

looks to small to be playable! The crowds that cram the stadiums roar and cheer, and a commentary option is available.

For a 70% complete tennis game, this has received a fair bit of playing time in the PLAY office. There are enough options and tough opponents to keep even the best players going, and it looks the part, despite a few little graphical glitches. *V-Tennis* is already better than *Power Serve*. Review soon.



[ABOVE] Before each match you can look at the player from all different angles. Hardly that special but it looks good!



[ABOVE] Each player has a variety of moves such as a volley, lob or a net-ripping smash!

BALLS!

CENTERCOURT

Blimey, what's

this – another tennis offering? Bus analogy anyone? ie you wait ages for one to arrive and then a load come along at once.

Past generation tennis games never actually looked that impressive, but made up for it with some brilliant gameplay, especially in multi-player or “Doubles” mode which could last for months – such as *Super Tennis* on the Nintendo Super NES.

Now, it seems that *Center Court* is going to help set a new standard for future next generation tennis sims, well, visually anyway.

Center Court features fully digitised players (with over 700 frames of animation each for those who like to know that sort of thing), placed on photo realistic court settings to make it all look just like one of those scorching hot days at Wimbledon.

COURT OUT

Telstar is claiming *Center Court* will be “The tennis game of 1996.” Yeah, well they’ll have to wait in line because this is just the first of at least six tennis sims coming out this summer. Backing up this boast though is a

sizeable list of features which allows up to four players to play at once on one of many different court surfaces (clay, grass, tarmac) and the introduction of some new gameplay features, like a gruelling “winner stays on” mode. Each character (and there are 32 to choose from, 16 male and 16 female) has varying attributes (speed, return power, return accuracy, judgement,

service power, service accuracy, reflexes and, er, nicety). Hopefully, Telstar Electronic Studios’ plans for a split-screen mode will be included (Development team The Dome hasn’t yet confirmed this as there’s some doubt about achieving the same frame rate) but even if that doesn’t appear, there are still plenty of other options such as a “Play The World” knockout mode and a full championship to contend with.

Best sounding of all is the Party mode, which allows between three and 12 people to play against each other until the last victorious and incredibly smug person remains. Let’s not forget to mention the sound effects to be put in, which consist of players grunting when they hit the ball, cheers from the crowd and shouts from the umpire. All in all, we’re looking forward to pitching *Center Court* against its rivals come review time.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Center Court
Publisher: Telstar Electronic Studios
% Complete: 90%
Release Date: July



[ABOVE] *Center Court* is said to have the most realistic graphics ever used in a tennis game, and who are we to argue?



[ABOVE] As well as the ever present umpire, ball boys and stewards are on hand to sort things out. They are also digitised and move accordingly. Nice.



[ABOVE] Any game with over 30 individual, intelligent opponents can't go wrong, can it? Some of them look right weird ones though – straight from the loony bin!



[ABOVE] The doubles match is undoubtedly the oldest yet most popular feature in any tennis game. This one looks a real time-devourer.



[ABOVE] The cars in DD2 are even more detailed, check out the roll cage seen through the windscreen.



[ABOVE] Most of the tracks feature large jumps – if you're not careful you can end up on your roof!

DEVASTATING

Blindsided, battered

and bewildered, that's how you'll feel after your

first time round the circuit in *Destruction Derby 2*. Now, *Destruction Derby* made your average road rage-inflicted driver look like someone pottering around in a Reliant Robin. It was full of great ideas, but these weren't backed up with enjoyable gameplay. Still, the execution of the game (the car control, the lack of actual racing, dodgy views, the too severe damage) had the one merit of not being so bad it screwed up the whole shebang.

Well, Psygnosis, through the developer, Reflections, has obviously been listening to the moans. We are not *Destruction Derby*'s biggest fans here at PLAY but the early demo of *Destruction Derby 2* we've had the pleasure of playing is simply astounding. 100 per cent better, at least. Nay, 200 per cent.

MAKE THE SPARKS FLY

Imagine racing on a massive track wide enough to get five cars racing side by side, being able to inflict yet more damage on each of your highly-polished rivals and, oh baby, the ability to fly. Speed bumps dotted around the tracks means that the cars can take off. The crossover track is one of the eight (maybe more) which are to go in, so that means, mid-air T-bone collisions! The circuits are now made

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

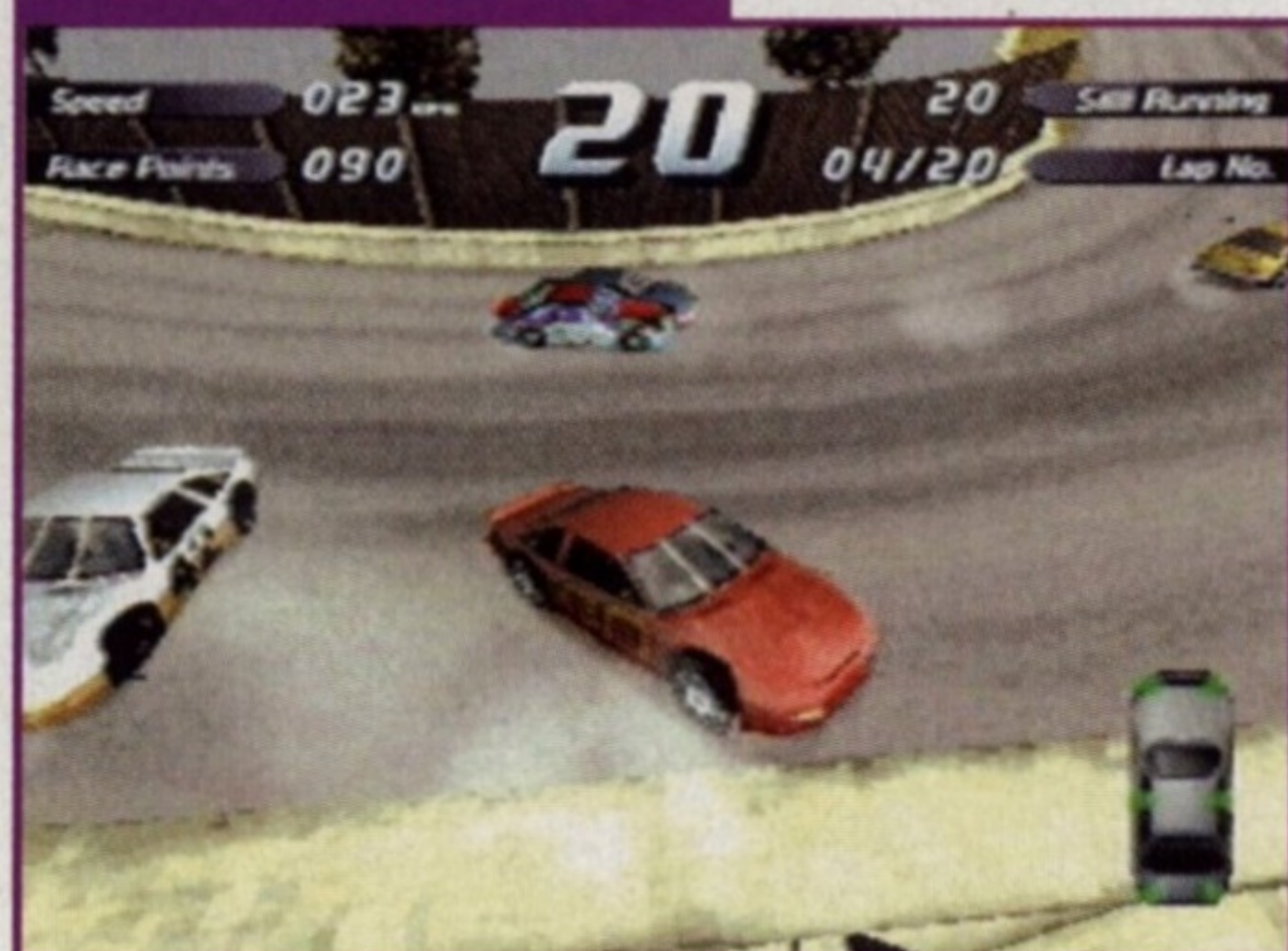
from proper 3-D wire-frame landscapes, like *Wipeout*, and look all the better for it, and one of the features that made the original so popular, the detail that showed on every car crash, has been tweaked radically. In *DD*, bits of metal flew everywhere, and the cars themselves showed every bit of damage suffered until they were unrecognisable smoking wrecks. The cars in *DD2* can actually roll-over, causing damage to the roof, so looking from behind the car it would appear it was crushed in, with the poor old driver reduced to peering through the steering wheel. Indeed, there's going to be more car twisting carnage than we thought possible, and the crashes look more spectacular than ever before! Cars don't just lose little bits of metal – they roll over and over (depending on their speed) spin, skid and burst into flames. There's also talk of making doors and wheels fly off.

Also, this time around you can carry out a few running repairs thanks to the all new pit stop feature. To top it all, a stunt construction option will allow the more daring player to rig up some death defying wrecking stunts. More news as soon as we can break down the door of Reflections' office.



[ABOVE] Fortunately, the camera angle changes when you spin so that you can see it from all angles.

[ABOVE] As you can see the tracks (this one's an oval) are much wider and more dramatic.



RELAX!

Prepare yourself

for what could be one of the most technologically advanced

and original games ever. Yes, *Aquanaut's Holiday* is one giant underwater adventure, and it's exclusively on the PlayStation. This game looks and sounds very special and promises to break the boundaries of home video gaming by utilising previously un-used genres (it's billed as interactive underwater exploration, for gawd's sake). Unsurprisingly, Sony is describing *Aquanaut's Holiday* as "unlike any video game ever experienced." What rubbish.

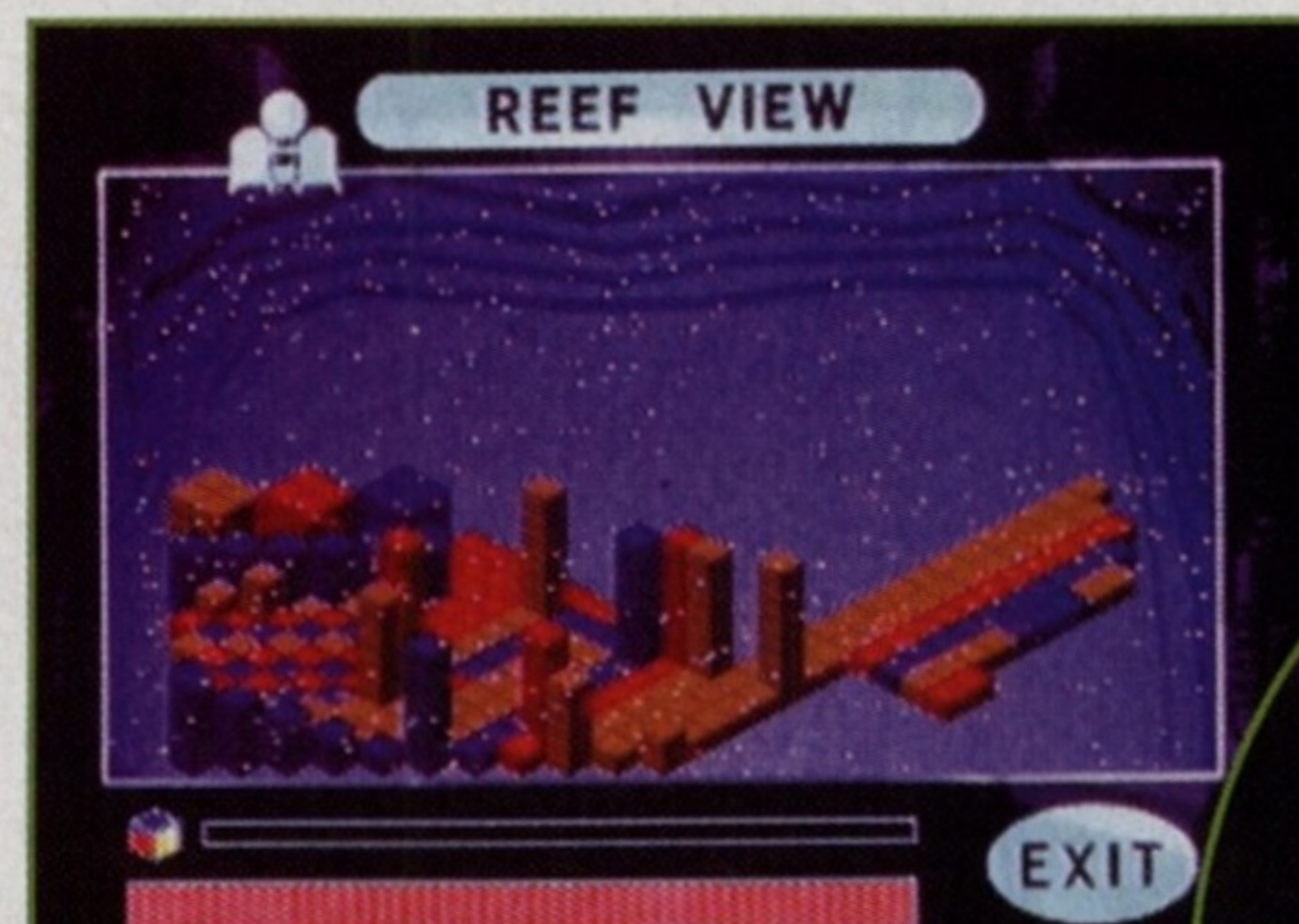
PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Aquanaut's Holiday
Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment
% Complete: 60%
Release Date: July

DOWN DOWN, DEEPER AND DOWN

The game casts you as an expert diver and underwater researcher. One who has been granted permission to take time off from work and explore the depths at his leisure. There will be no bosses, no energy boosting icons and no time limits – *Aquanaut's Holiday* claims to give you total freedom of movement in a submersible exploration pod emersed in some of the most exotic waters in the Caribbean. There are specific missions to complete, from general exploration and recording of undersea life to more complex tasks such as building coral reefs so that the fish have a place to feed and spawn. Sounds like a true environmentally-friendly game. The undersea worlds look breath-taking and are huge, not to mention teeming with aquatic life. Equipped with a device to communicate with the fish, manta rays and even sharks, the 3-D environment is said to allow your character to explore any part of the undersea world. Newly

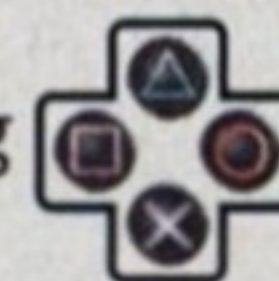
AQUANAUT'S HOLIDAY



[ABOVE] As well as underwater exploration, you must build a coral reef to protect the fish, and this screen is essential. It shows up the more sensitive areas as a different colour. These you must protect.



discovered areas can be marked with a buoy and act as restart points. Better still, there are no rules and no time limits. It's just different with a capital D – a sea exploration game that nobody has ever tried before, for home consoles or in the arcades. Watch this space for more info on this unique PlayStation experience. Not a game for gun fetishists or those of you waiting for *Quake* though.

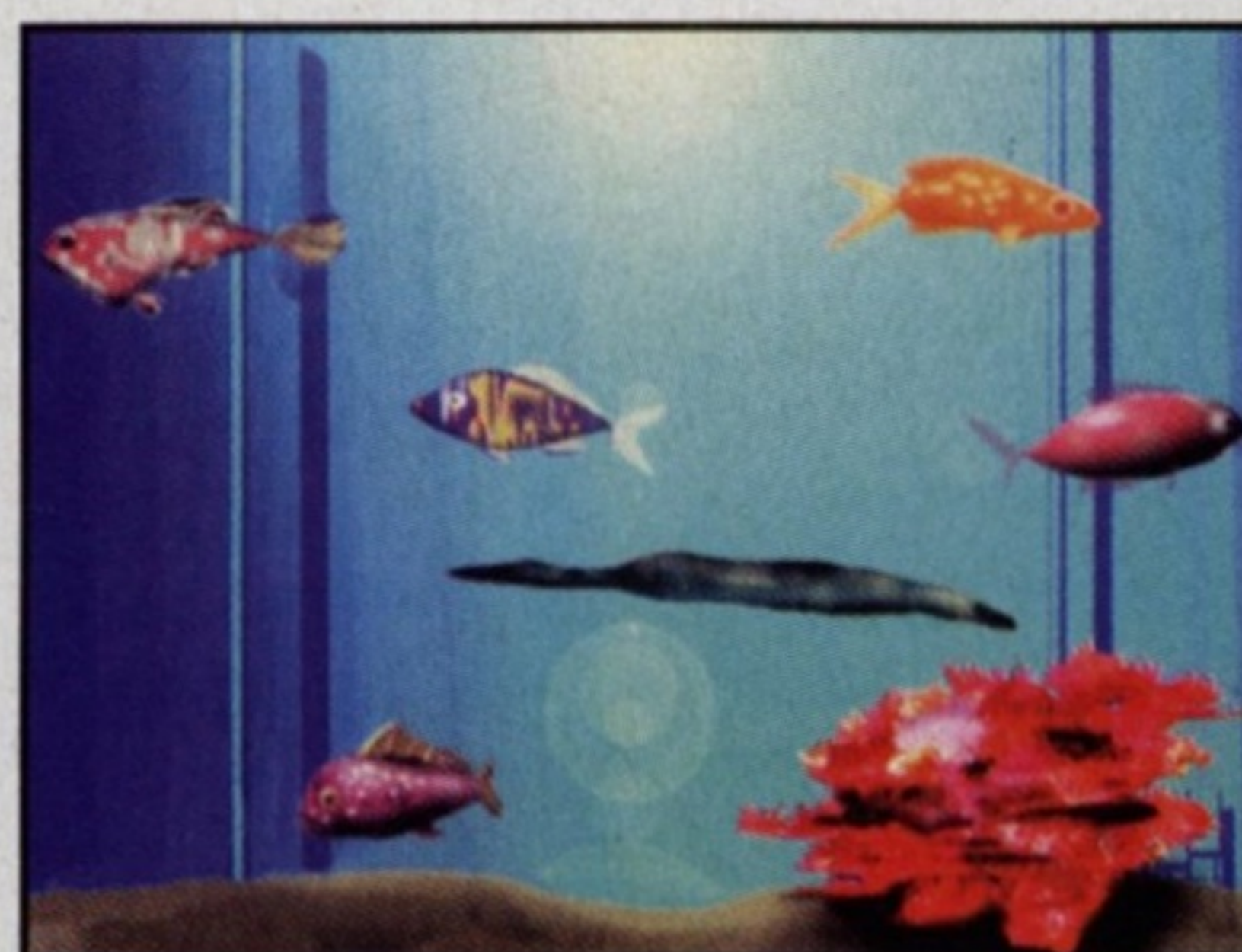
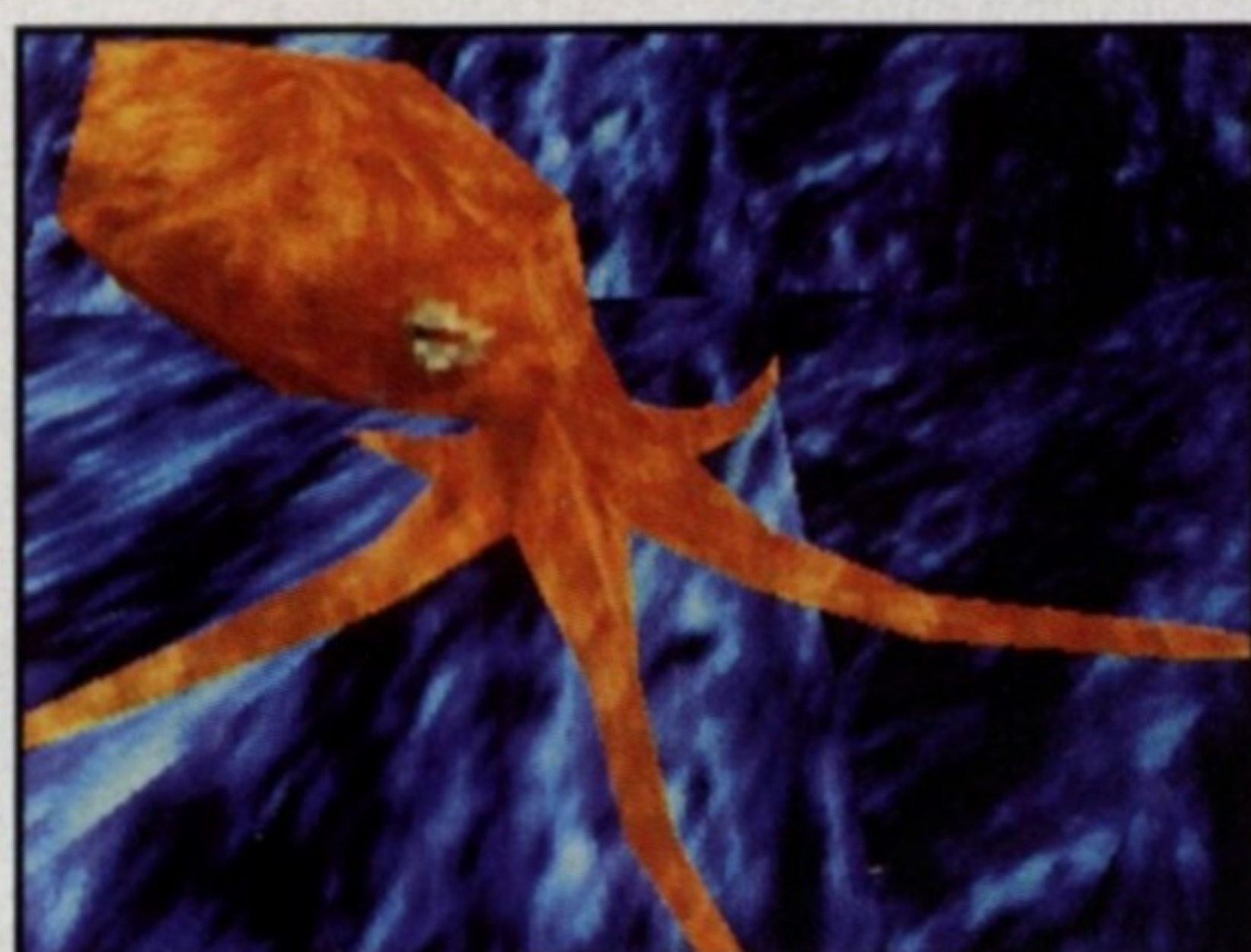


Did you have an enjoyable time?

[ABOVE] And that says it all really. The whole game is designed to be incredibly relaxing. Where's the harpoons we say!

FISH 'N' SQUIDS

THERE ARE MANY THINGS TO DO AND SEE IN *AQUANAUT'S HOLIDAY* BUT IT WOULD TAKE A LIFETIME (WELL, MOST OF THE MAG) TO DESCRIBE THEM HERE. IF YOU'RE FEELING TENSE, WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO EXCEPT TO WATCH THE EXOTIC UNDERSEA LIFE AS IT SWIMS PAST? ALTERNATIVELY, YOU COULD STUDY AND RECORD THEIR BEHAVIOUR. WHO NEEDS AN AQUARIUM WHEN YOU CAN SOON SAMPLE THESE UNDERWATER DELIGHTS ON YOUR HOME CONSOLE...



WHAT'S THE STORY...



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FRANKLY SPEAKING...

WHAT · WHO · WHERE · WHY

STRATEGY

PLAY: What does Ocean want to achieve on PlayStation?

Paul Patterson (deputy managing director): Ocean wants to do on the PlayStation exactly what it's been doing for the past 13 years on myriad platforms – produce the very best in interactive entertainment. With the PlayStation we've got a fantastic gift. A machine with brilliant capabilities from a company with a vast amount of marketing muscle and the resources to power the platform through to an expanding market.

Ocean has already established itself as one of the most prolific PlayStation publishers with a portfolio which includes *Zero Divide*, *True Pinball* and *Worms*. This is set to continue with a roster of groundbreaking titles set for release in the future.

PLAY: Ocean's been going for a long time, how has it changed over the last few years? Paul Patterson: We've changed dramatically. Tribe was created, a structured external development system set in place and important relationships with people like Team 17, DID and Neon were formed. From a medium sized European player, Ocean became a 'Super publisher' with distribution in well over 250 countries and an enviable portfolio of product and brands. After the merger with Infogrames we have access to a development community which numbers well over 500 people and rank as the world's fifth largest company of our kind.

PLAY: Rightly or wrongly, Ocean has a reputation for producing licence-based games rather than its own concepts. Is this fair? Paul Patterson: It's true. Ocean has done deals with all the major movie studios in the world. We've produced movie based games from *Rambo* to *Jurassic Park* and they've been amongst our all time best sellers. Hollywood had an established base

of creativity and it was always an excellent source of creative narrative in the past. Today our own creative resources are at least as good as, and often much better. Interactive entertainment is today much looser than Hollywood creatively – game's aren't designed by committee, not at Ocean anyway, and the medium allows for almost limitless possibilities. Titles like Tribe's *Dreadnought* and Neon's *Tunnel B1* would make brilliant movies and show far more flair than anything that's come from Hollywood in years.

PLAY: How would you assess Ocean's PlayStation performance so far?

Paul Patterson: Whatever the machine, whatever the technology, playability will always be the key to a good game. After less than a year Ocean's PlayStation record is remarkable. *Worms*, *Zero Divide* and *True Pinball* have all been acclaimed and, with the help of Neon, Tribe, Team 17 and other developers we won't let this record slip. We're also gearing up our in-house studio – Tribe. These people will create the future of games which, I can promise you, is only just beginning.

DEVELOPMENT

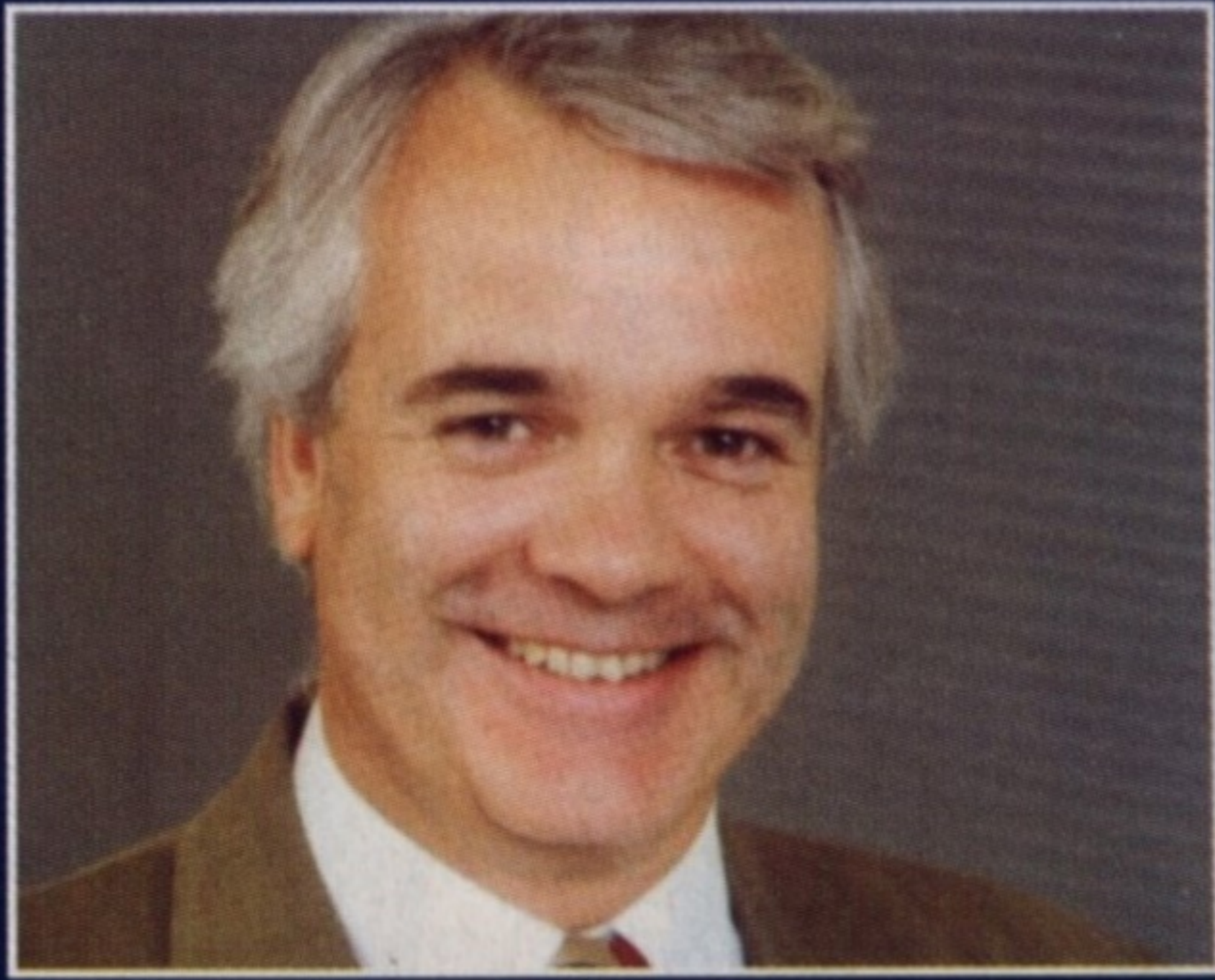
PLAY: Why was Tribe set up?

Ian Turnbull (Head of Internal development): Basically to give the in-house development team its own identity. Ocean publishes so many products from different development companies. There was no way for the general public to identify which products were developed by Ocean internally.

PLAY: How is Tribe structured?

Ian Turnbull: Totally team led. Tribe is made up of individual teams. One team per product. Each team has a Team leader (responsible for the project co-ordination and making sure that people talk to each other). The clever thing is that the so called management positions are filled by functional members of the team. Tribe doesn't have layers of wasted management costing loads of money driving penis extensions. We employ the right people to do the right job, and most importantly people that know how to do it. Okay, someone does need to be in overall control of the projects to make sure that things are on track and that things are flowing smoothly. So, supporting the teams we have two management, myself and the assistant manager Nicky Whitworth. Cross project communication is something that is key to Tribe. Tribe has four main project teams. This means that if someone has a problem then there is always some one to help out. Also, the projects we do are all very different. So, lots of ideas bouncing around between projects and people stops people getting stuck in a rut.



[PAUL PATTERSON]

PAUL PATTERSON, DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR:
 "Interactive entertainment is today much looser than Hollywood creatively... titles like Tribe's *Dreadnought* and neon's *Tunnel B1* would make brilliant movies and show far more flair than anything that's come from Hollywood in years."

[IAN TURNBULL]

IAN TURNBULL, HEAD OF INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT:
 "Tribe doesn't have layers of wasted management costing loads of money driving around in penis extensions. We employ the right people to do the right job, and most importantly know how to do it."

[SIMON ALTY]

SIMON ALTY, MARKETING DIRECTOR:
 "Ocean believes that there is little sense in trying to put a specific tag on anyone who might own a PlayStation... the change in thinking here is that we don't try to define the person anymore – we try to look at a way of life."

PLAY: How many titles are you working on?
 Ian Turnbull: Four titles this year: *Dawn of Darkness*, *Zoiks!*, *Dreadnought* and a secret project we are keeping from everyone until later this year because it is frankly stunning! So no screen shots, no, no, NO! But you'll see of the above. Soon.

MARKETING

PLAY: What is a marketing person and what does he/she do?

Simon Alty (marketing director): Ocean has an in-house marketing team of around ten people. These range from product managers, to public relations staff and the all important "Shirly the Cleaner" TM. Take some traditional marketing skills, mix with some pure and very adulterated fun, garnish with the alcoholic beverage of your choice and cook until an intense bout of pre-senile dementia sets in – that's marketing that is!

PLAY: How would you describe the average PlayStation owner?

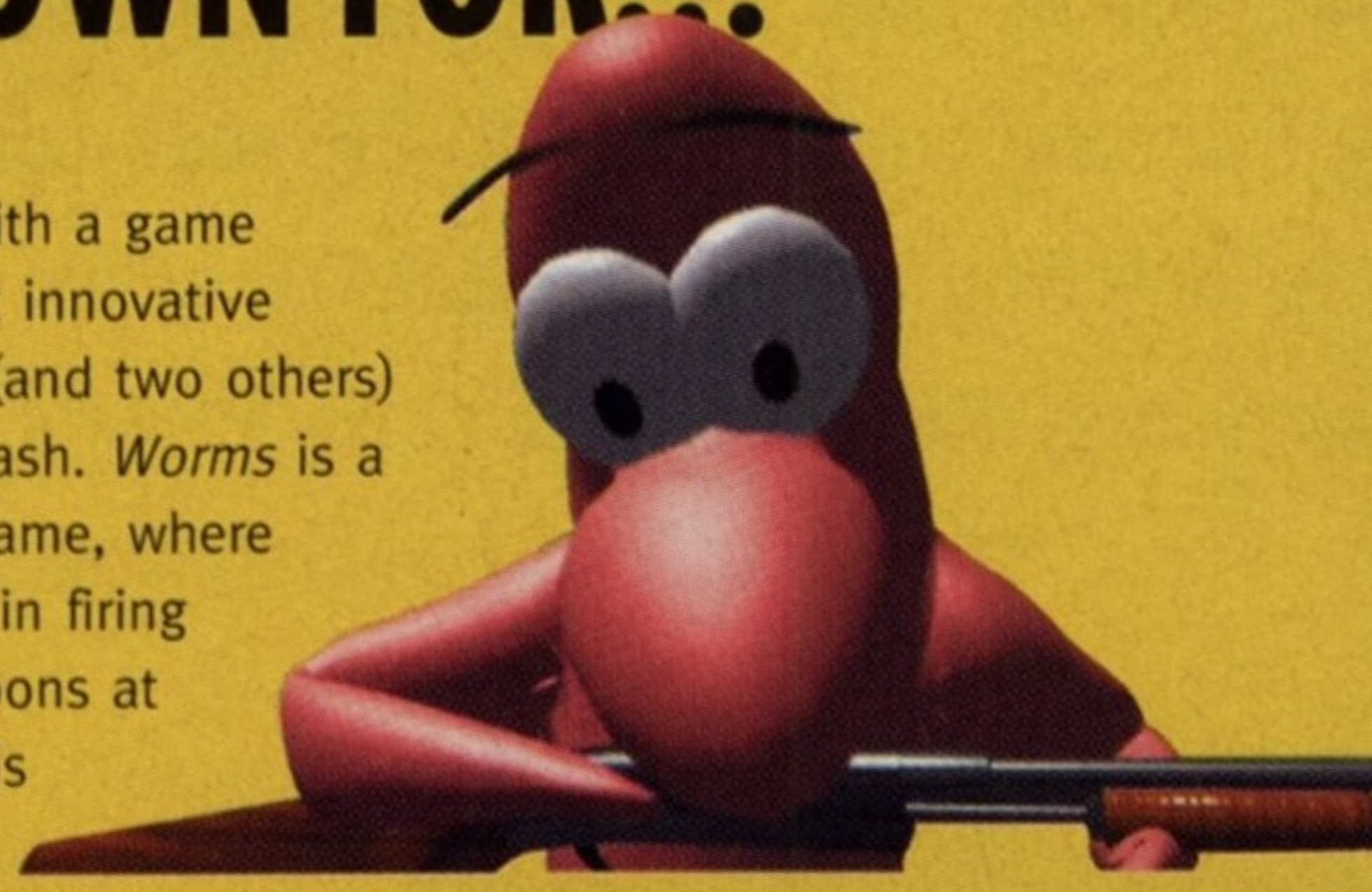
Simon Alty: Tricky. Who are you? Ocean believes that there is little sense in trying to put a specific tag on anyone who might own a PlayStation. PlayStation owners might play a lot of games – they might not. They might be completely and passionately absorbed by games – they might not. The change in thinking here is that Ocean doesn't try to define the person anymore – we try to look at a way of life.

PLAY: What's your impression of current PlayStation software?

Simon Alty: It's very split. The good stuff is brilliant. The bad stuff is abysmal. Developers are still learning a lot about the PlayStation, its capabilities and just how far they can push it. Look at the stuff we have seen on the Super NES recently – *Doom*, *Killer Instinct* or *Mario RPG*.

**BEST KNOWN FOR...
WORMS**

You can't really argue with a game that picked up the most innovative new game ECTS award (and two others) at this year's industry bash. *Worms* is a delightful multi-player game, where each player takes turns in firing an array of deadly weapons at an opponent's squad, his band of Worms.

**IN DEVELOPMENT****[VIPER]**

DUE: OCTOBER

Coded by Neon, and already the subject of one *PLAY* cover, helicopter shoot-'em-up *Viper* takes the lighting effects of *Tunnel B1* and adds frenetic airborne action.

[ZOIKS!]

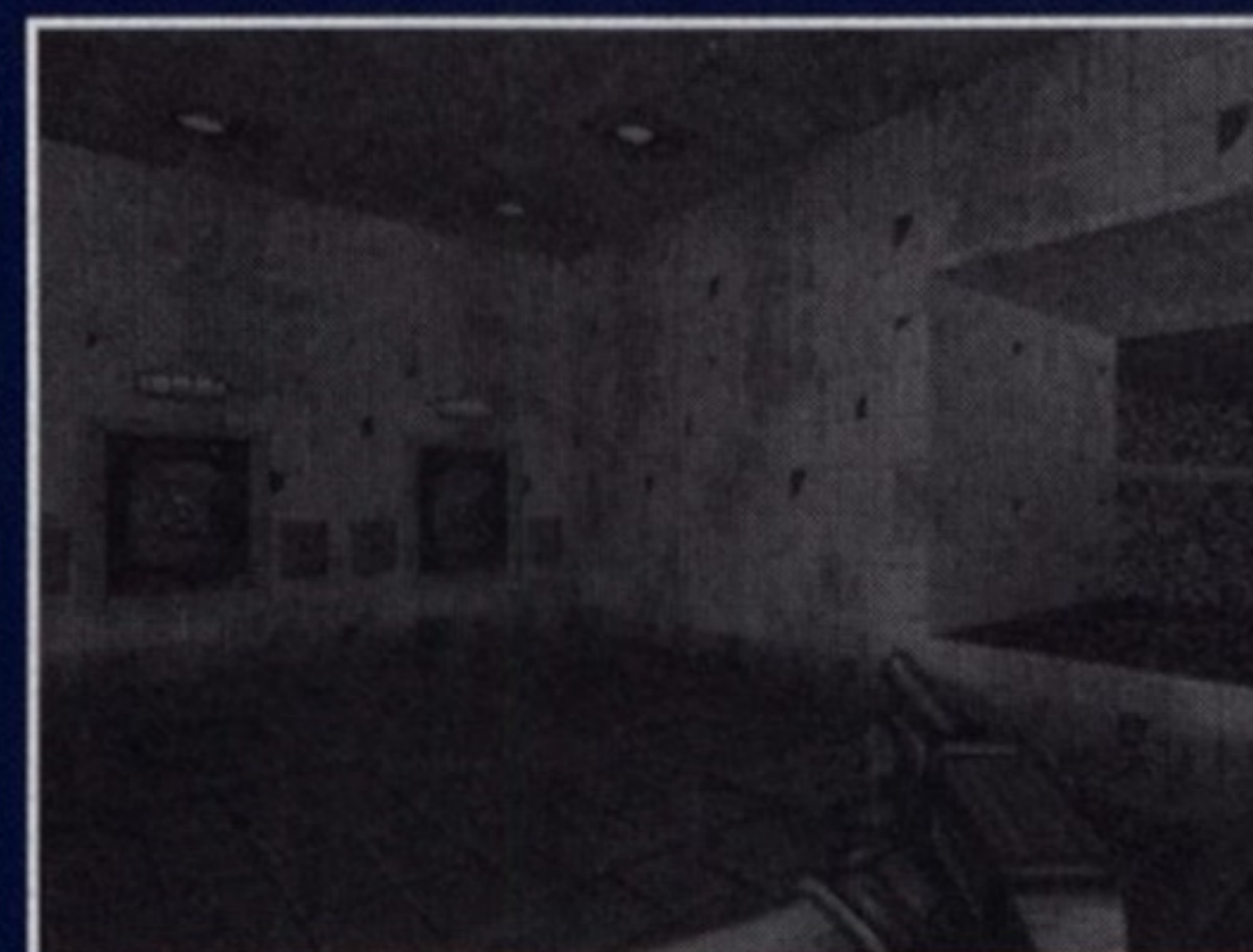
DUE: CHRISTMAS



A cartoon adventure featuring all Hanna Barbera characters such as Scooby, Fred Flintstone, Penelope Pitstop and Huckleberry Hound, *Zoiks!* looks like being a lot of fun.

[DAWN OF DARKNESS]

DUE: CHRISTMAS



DOD is a first person perspective shoot-'em-up set in a true 3-D environment. Featuring an excellent sounding head-to-head option, this is Tribe's attempt to out-*Quake* the boys from id.

SOFTOGRAPHY**OCEAN HI-LIGHTS
THROUGHOUT THE YEARS.**

- 1983 – Hunchback (Spectrum)
- 1985 – Daley Thompson's Decathlon (Spectrum)
- 1986 – Knightrider (Spectrum)
- 1986 – Wizball (C64)
- 1987 – Head Over Heels (Spectrum)
- 1991 – F-29 Retaliator (Amiga)
- 1993 – Jurassic Park (SNES)
- 1994 – Inferno (PC)
- 1995 – Worms (PlayStation and other formats)
- 1995 – Power Serve (PlayStation)
- 1996 – Zero Divide (PlayStation)
- 1996 – True Pinball (PlayStation)

WHAT NEXT?

The next 12 months can only be a good times for Ocean. Even though it is yet to be reviewed, industry money men from the US and Japan have been falling over themselves to licence *Tunnel B1*. Then, Ocean has *Viper*, *Zoiks!*, *Dawn Of Darkness*, *Worms 2*, *Project X2* and *Dreadnought* still to come. You can expect to see the Ocean logo on a lot more *PLAY* pages in the future.

ARENA

VIEWS · QUESTIONS · CRITICISMS · IDEAS

THE SEETHING HOTBED OF CHAT THAT IS PLAY'S ARENA IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS ONCE MORE. PEEVED THAT ALL GAMES LOOK THE SAME THESE DAYS? AGGRAVATED BY A GAME RELEASE DATE THAT KEEPS SLIP SLIDING AWAY? OR PERHAPS YOU'RE CART WHEELING FOR JOY BECAUSE THE PLAYSTATION IS A SLICE OF PURE PERFECTION AND YOU CAN'T GET ENOUGH? WHATEVER YOUR COMPULSION, GET YOUR LETTERS IN TO US NOW AND WE'LL TRY TO GIVE YOU A SEMI-LITERATE REPLY. SEND YOUR DAZZLING PROSE TO:

ARENA, PLAY MAGAZINE, PARAGON HOUSE, ST PETER'S ROAD, BOURNEMOUTH BH1 2JS.

OR E-MAIL US AT PLAY@PARAGON.CO.UK.

DEAR PLAY,

I have just read your review of *The Need for Speed* and as this is a game I was planning to get for myself and daughter I was pleased to see it scoring so high. However it was also reviewed in one of your rival mags and their advice was to ignore it, as it is slow and boring, thus it received a somewhat lower mark than you gave it. Why are the marks so different? Is the game any good or not?

As a more mature gamer (35) I quite like the more strategy orientated game and have noticed that *Sim City 2000* is advertised for the Saturn, are we going to see a PlayStation version in the future?

P Mason, Merseyside

There's no accounting for taste, Mr Mason. The other mags are obviously wrong. We've been playing *The Need for Speed* non-stop since we got it in the office (especially in link-up mode) and we like it even more than that blond hairdresser on *Coronation street* – and that's saying something. *NFS* first came out on the 3DO and it was great then, but the PlayStation version is even better,



[ABOVE] Why did PLAY give this game over 90%, surely it's crap. Er, no actually, see letter by P Mason.

with more features and a higher frame rate. Admittedly, it is less of a simulation and easier to drive, but that makes it more fun in multi-player mode.

The other PlayStation magazines cannot understand a game which requires a little bit more investment in terms of time spent learning how to get the best out of each car, and they obviously did not play it for long enough. If you want mindless go-stop racing, then opt for *Ridge Racer Revolution*, *The Need for Speed* is for driving connoisseurs.

Yes, *Sim City 2000* will arrive on PlayStation in the autumn and we'll have a full look next issue.

DEAR PLAY,

Does playing a Jap/American game on a PAL machine do any long term damage? A mate of mine seems to

think so. I am asking you so I can show my mate in black and white the real truth. Please could you answer this question as it will help me a lot. Keep it up!

H Warburton, Leeds

No, it doesn't damage the PlayStation running the imported software, but there are rumours (no doubt started and perpetuated by Sony) that prolonged use of the special method to get the games to work in the first place (ie, a pen top jammed in the slot) could ruin the motor that drives the CD. It may be just scare mongering, but no-one has conducted any tests to see if it's true. If it does go 'pop' though, don't expect Sony to keep to its warranty agreement – they will laugh in your face.

DEAR PLAY,

Having just seen the brilliant film, *Hackers*, I was intrigued at one point a quarter of the way through, Dade goes into a cyber-type club and plays something that looks astonishing, like an incredibly souped up version of *Wipeout* on a giant screen. It had the arrow shaped craft, the roller coaster type

track, even the advertisement boards around the outside of the track with Sony and the PlayStation logos on them. So just what was it? It seemed too slick and glossy to be played in real time, did Sony render these cut scenes specifically for the film? Or is it simply a running demo for the software industry? If it was a demo for the upcoming *Wipeout 2*, it's gob-smacking! But as much as I'd like to believe it, I doubt it is. I'm extremely curious now to find out what it was.

David Stokes, Walsall

No-one here has seen the film because it's apparently complete arse, but I doubt it is *Wipeout 2* because the film was created before the original came out. It is more likely that *Hackers* features the rendered intro from the first game and not *Wipeout 2*, which incidentally is heavily featured this issue.

DEAR PLAY,

Since I got my PlayStation in February I have had nothing but fun, but being a Trekker I must admit to feeling a bit left out, as from what I have seen, *Star Trek*



[ABOVE] Is *Wipeout 2* featured in the film, *Hackers*, asks David Stokes? No actually.

interactive games are only available on the PC. So, when I read your magazine in March for the first time, I thought a magazine of such good quality would definitely know if there is, or whether there will be one for the PlayStation.

Matthew Fletcher, e-mail

PS Thanks to your excellent write up on *Wing Commander III*, I went out and got it and have had a great time completing this game. Well done on an excellent mag!

MicroProse will releasing *Star Trek: Generations* in September and unlike all previous *Star Trek* games it will feature two distinct styles of gameplay: first person perspective levels (like *Doom*) and 3-D space battles featuring the Enterprise and assorted Cornish pasty heads.

Hi!

I just wanted to say that I don't think that there is any need for PlayStation owners to worry about the release of the Ultra 64 as they are basically all upgrades from Super NES games and the almighty PlayStation has some excellent and original games lined up.

Lee Mountford, e-mail

Amen.

DEAR PLAY,

I am a recent convert to the PlayStation and I cannot believe my new found gaming experience. I was a Super NES owner who was going to wait for Nintendo 64, but I woke up! I have some queries:

1. I am a *Mortal Kombat 3* freak, are the ultimate characters hidden

in the PSX version, and can I fight Goro and Johnny Cage like in the arcade?

2. Will Sony be releasing any educational software like *Eincarta*?

3. I have *Alien Trilogy*, *MIK3*, *Doom* and *Tekken* – all similar genres. I am not really sporty, could you recommend any sports games for the PSX?

I notice that people are interested in making their PlayStations sound excellent, well I have the ultimate way. Buy a pro logic receiver, plug the PSX into the CD input, close your curtains and turn on *Alien Trilogy* or *Doom*. Fantastic! Keep up the good work, you're a credit to good informative journalism!

Cameron Vallance, Brighton

PS What's the best racing game on the PSX?

Sounds like you've got a decent enough set-up there, Cameron, but you might like to turn to page 16 for the ultimate home PlayStation set-up.

1. No, the characters in *Ultimate Mortal Kombat* are only open to Saturn owners and those playing the coin-op version. You cannot play Goro against Johnny Cage in *MIK3*.

2. Nope. Just beat-'em-ups and racing games (cynical git – Ed)

3. The best sports games on the PlayStation at the moment are *Olympic Games* from US Gold, Konami's *Track and Field*, and *Total NBA '96*.

PS *The Need for Speed*.

DEAR PLAY,

Why I can't find the latest issue(s) of PLAY here in New York City? I have the Feb and March issues, but have seen nothing since. In fact, the March issue has been on some stands for a couple of months. Did the mag die? Is there a problem with US distributors? I always see new issues of Paragon's Saturn and 3DO mags. What's the deal? I need PLAY! The American PlayStation mags are mostly crap! I would

deeply appreciate a reply to this e-mail.

Rick Cousin, e-mail

Unfortunately it is enormously complicated for a UK publishing company to break into the USA and so your exposure to PLAY is very limited. It usually arrives by ship to save costs and is distributed in only a few select places, mainly Virgin megastores, so why not try there?

The only way to guarantee a copy of PLAY every month is to subscribe and that's £63 (about 100 dollars). PLAY is very much alive. Glad you like the mag!



[ABOVE] The Sony PlayStation – sexier than Drew Barrymore, so Mark Kemperman thinks.

proved me wrong.

I'm not familiar with the tech specs on the PSX, but how in the hell does something like this move graphics and plays video (*Wing Commander III* for instance) so much better (and accesses very much faster) than my late Pentium? My PC was worth around \$6,000 (3,000 pounds), but couldn't perform like the PlayStation, which cost \$600. What has it got that the PC hasn't?

Please don't read this as a "one platform is better than another," that's not what I'm getting at. It's just the remarkable performance of the PSX which has really made me curious as to what is inside the beastie and makes it tick. I've

played some great games on the PC, but now I'm playing better games (in every way

– graphics, speed and sound) on the PlayStation (minus the hassles of Windows, sound cards, memory restrictions and screen configurations etc)

and I'd like to find out a bit more as to why.

Mark Kemperman, Adelaide, Australia

I am in exactly the same boat. Like you, I came from a PC background and then moved into PlayStation, and like you, I have not touched my huge cream coloured box since Mr Sony and his box of tricks set up shop in my house and I was introduced to the wonders of *Bust-A-Move 2* (*Puzzle Bobble 2* in Japan).

The PlayStation is capable of such great technological feats because of its custom graphics chips, which allow it to concentrate its processing power on the game rather than cosmetics. Those huge texture mapped ships in *Wing III* are meat 'n' two veg for the PSX, whereas you need a mega-nutter PC to do the same job because it has no in-built chip support – it all goes through the processor and therefore needs to be exponentially faster to achieve the same effect.

DEAR PLAY,

I wrote to you last week bemoaning the lack of PLAY here in NYC. You suggested checking out a Virgin megastore. Well, I did and had no trouble finding PLAY. Thanks millions. I am now happy and content and can show my face amongst the living once more.

Rick Cousin, e-mail

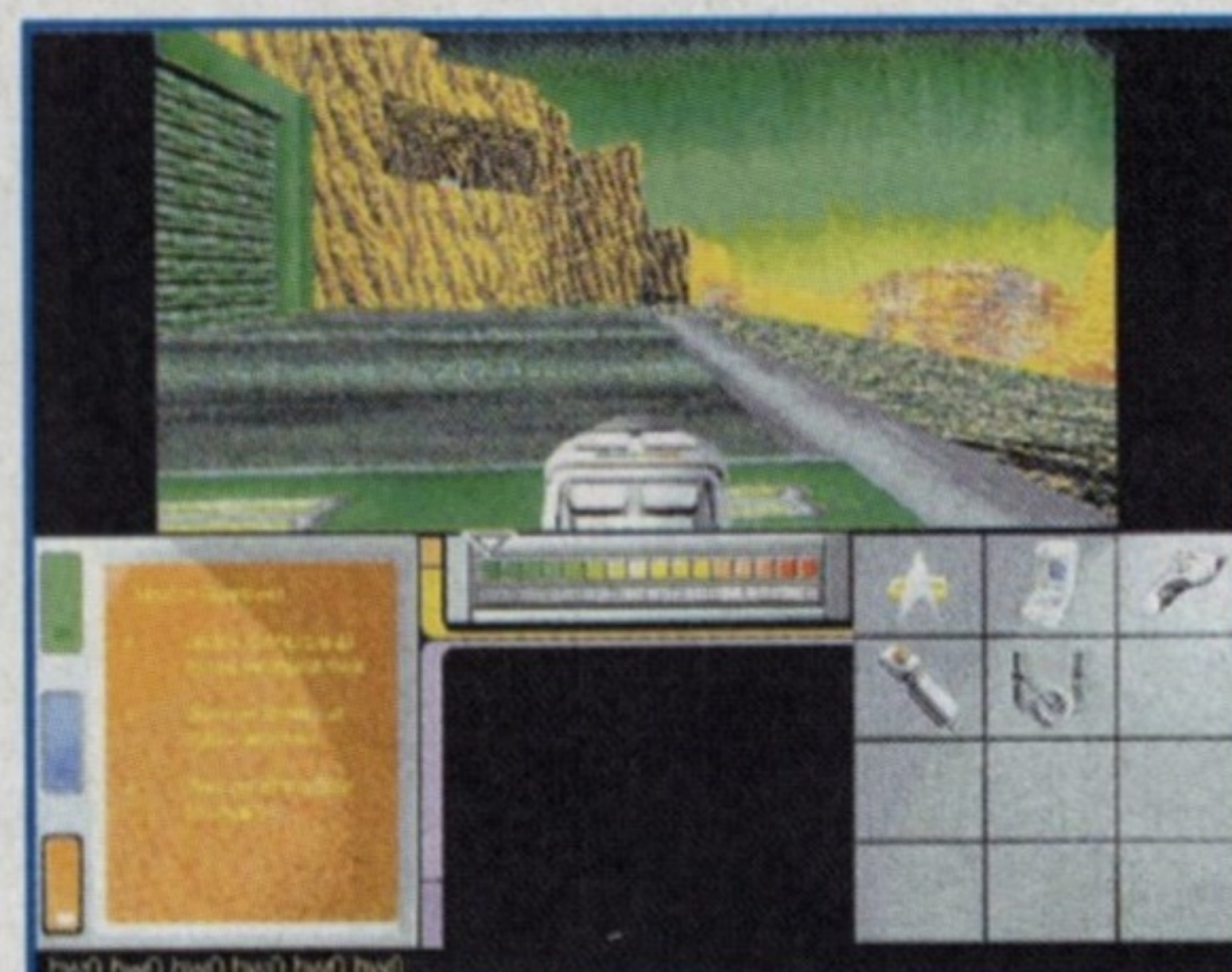
Another case solved. The world is safe from evil tyranny once more.

DEAR PLAY,

Last week I had the misfortune of giving the Last Rites to my Pentium PC. Selling all my games and accessories, I opted for a PlayStation and a friend gave me a copy of PLAY to go with it (an excellent mag to start off with). That was yesterday. This morning was spent cleaning the drool off the TV screen from seeing this thing in action. I thought PCs were the be all and end all in terms of games, but the PSX has



[ABOVE] *Star Trek* comes to the PSX at last, see letter by Matthew Fletcher.



We reserve the right to edit your letters and regret we cannot reply personally. If you want us to print your e-mail address for further electronic discussion, please give specific permission at the end of your letter.

PLAYback

チハオケチスヌウエ

PLAYBACK IS YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT IN THE WORLD OF PLAYSTATION GAMING. THE LISTS BELOW HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY THE ENTIRE PLAY TEAM IN WHAT STARTED AS AN AUTHORITATIVE DISCUSSION BUT QUICKLY TURNED INTO A VIOLENT DRUNKEN BRAWL. IN OUR OPINION THEY REPRESENT THE BEST GAMES IN EACH GENRE AND THE ONES YOU SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ADDING TO YOUR COLLECTION. EVERY MONTH WE ASSESS THE CURRENT CROP OF GAMES THAT HAVE BEEN REVIEWED AND ADD THE CHOICE CUTS TO THESE DEFINITIVE TOPS TENS. PICK ANY OF THE GAMES IN OUR TOP THREES HERE AND YOU CAN'T GO WRONG!

GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	REVIEW DATE	REVIEW SCORE
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BEAT-'EM-UPS

1. Tekken 2

2. Street Fighter Alpha
3. Tekken
4. MK3
5. Rise Of The Robots 2
6. Criticom
7. Primal Rage
8. New Jap Pro Wrestling
9. Battle Arena Toshinden
10. Street Fighter: The Movie



Namco

Capcom
Namco
Williams
Mirage
Vic Tokai
Probe
Tomy
Takara
Capcom

Sony

Capcom/VIE
Sony
Sony
Mirage
VIE
Warner Interactive
Import
Sony
Acclaim

May '96

May '96
Nov '95
Nov '95
Mar '96
Feb '96
Feb '96
Dec '95
Nov '95
Nov '95

95%

93%
95%
93%
88%
87%
85%
84%
76%
68%

FIRST PERSON PERSPECTIVE SHOOT-'EM-UPS

1. Alien Trilogy

2. Doom
3. Magic Carpet
4. Descent
5. PO'ed
6. Shellshock
7. Crazy Ivan
8. Assault Rigs
9. Lone Soldier
10. Warhawk



Probe

id Software
Krisalis/Bullfrog
Interplay
Studio3Do
Core Design
Psygnosis
Wheelhaus
Tempest
Sony USA

Acclaim

GT Interactive
Bullfrog/EA
Interplay
Warner Interactive
Core Design
Psygnosis
Psygnosis
Telstar
Sony

Easter '96

Jan '96
Easter '96
Easter '96
May '96
Easter '96
Feb '96
Jan '96
Dec '95
Jan '96

91%

93%
90%
85%
87%
85%
90%
81%
92%
68%

ARCADE SHOOT-'EM-UPS

1. Gunship

2. Loaded
3. Starfighter 3000
4. Return Fire
5. Thunderhawk 2: Firestorm
6. Williams Arcade Greatest Hits
7. Shock Wave Assault
8. Top Gun
9. Air Combat
10. Agile Warrior



MicroProse

Gremlin Interactive
Krisalis
Silent Software
Core Design
Williams
EA
Spectrum Holobyte
Namco
Black Ops Ent.

MicroProse

Gremlin Interactive
Telstar
Warner Interactive
Core Design
GT Interactive
EA
MicroProse
Sony
VIE

Jun '96

Nov '95
Jun '96
May '96
Jan '96
Jun '96
Jan '96
Jul '96
Dec '95
Feb '96

90%

85%
85%
84%
85%
84%
87%
76%
81%
79%

GAME

DEVELOPER

PUBLISHER

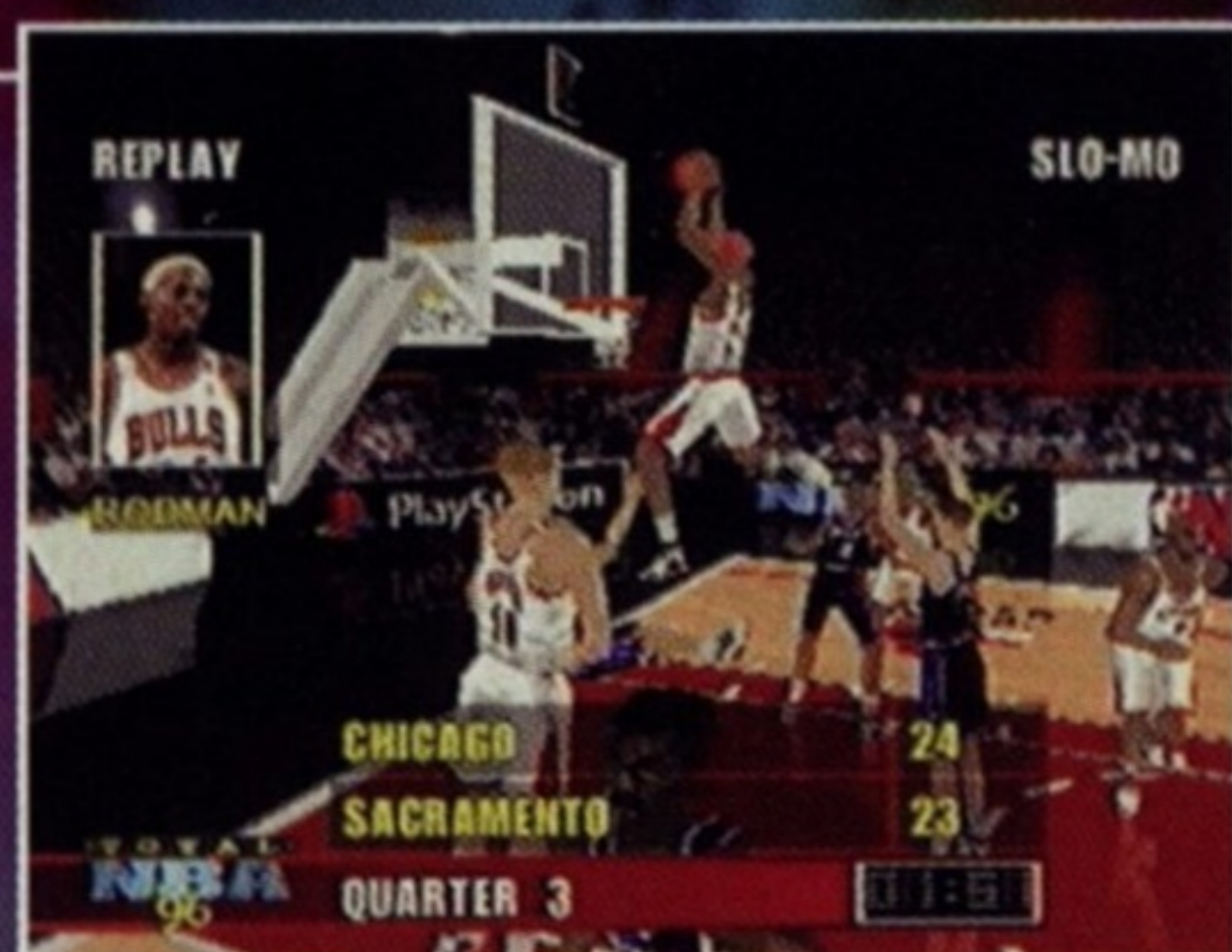
REVIEW DATE

REVIEW SCORE

SPORTS SIMS

1. Total NBA '96

2. adidas Power Soccer
3. Actua Soccer
4. Olympic Games
5. Konami Track & Field
6. Sampras Extreme
7. Striker '96
8. Big Hurt Baseball
9. NFL Quarterback Club '96
10. PGA Tour '96



Sony

Psygnosis
Gremlin Interactive
Silicon Dreams
Konami Japan
Codemasters
Rage Software
Iguana Ent
Iguana Ent
EA

Sony

Psygnosis
Gremlin Interactive
US Gold
Konami
Codemasters
Warner Interactive
Acclaim
Acclaim
EA

Mar '96

Easter '96
Feb '96
Jul '96
Jul '96
Jul '96
Nov '95
Jul '96
Jul '96
Dec '95

94%

95%
94%
89%
85%
90%
89%
81%
80%
86%

STRATEGY/ADVENTURE GAMES

1. Resident Evil

2. Fade to Black
3. X-Com
4. Theme Park
5. Wing Commander 3
6. Alone In The Dark
7. Discworld
8. Defcon 5
9. D
10. Myst



Capcom

Delphine
MicroProse
Krisalis/Bullfrog
Origin
Infogrames
Perfect 10
Millennium Interactive
Warp
Softbank

VIE

EA
MicroProse
Bullfrog/EA
EA
Infogrames
Psygnosis
Psygnosis
Acclaim
Psygnosis

Jun '96

Jul '96
Easter '96
Nov '95
Easter '96
Feb '96
Nov '95
Jan '96
Easter '96
May '96

95%

90%
82%
86%
82%
77%
74%
88%
69%
68%

PUZZLE/PARTY GAMES

1. Bust-A-Move 2

2. Worms
3. Hebereke's Popitto



Taito

Team 17/Ocean
Sunsoft

Acclaim

Team 17/Ocean
Marubeni

Jun '96

Nov '95
Dec '95

88%

92%
43%

RACING GAMES

1. The Need For Speed

2. Wipeout
3. Ridge Racer Revolution
4. Ridge Racer
5. Impact Racing
6. Destruction Derby
7. Hi-Octane
8. Twisted Metal
9. Road Rash
10. Cyberspeed



EA

Psygnosis
Namco
Namco
FunCom
Reflections
Bullfrog
Sony
EA
Mindscape France

EA

Psygnosis
Sony
Sony
JVC/VIE
Psygnosis
Bullfrog/EA
Sony
EA
Mindscape

Easter '96

Nov '95
May '96
Nov '95
Mar '96
Nov '95
Jan '96
Dec '95
Mar '96
Dec '95

94%

94%
90%
93%
87%
86%
80%
78%
75%
65%

PLATFORMERS

1. Jumping Flash 2

2. Rayman
3. Jumping Flash
4. Johnny Bazookatone
5. Gex
6. Herme Hopperhead
7. Cheesy



Sony

Ubisoft
Sony
Arc Development
Crystal Dynamics
Sony
Ocean

import

UbiSoft
Sony
US Gold
BMG Interactive
Import
Ocean

Jun '96

Nov '95
Nov '95
Feb '96
Easter '96
Dec '95
July '96

86%

87%
87%
85%
76%
53%
50%

A BEACH

CLASSIC **SPECTRUM** GAMES AUTHOR **JON RITMAN** (WITH HIS PAL JOHN COOK) HAS **JUST SET UP** HIS OWN **DEVELOPMENT** COMPANY CALLED **CRANBERRY SOURCE**. AS IT'S THE **SUMMER**, AND JON LIKES **BEACH** FOOD, WE THANKED GOD WE LIVED IN **BOURNEMOUTH** AND SET THE BAR-B-Q UP TO **DISCUSS** CRANBERRY'S NEW PROJECT THE **QUINTESSENTIAL ART OF DESTRUCTION** (KIND OF **MAGIC CARPET MEETS CHOPLIFTER**) COMING TO A **PLAYSTATION** NEAR YOU **LATER** THIS YEAR.

PLAY INFORMATION

Name: Jon Ritman
Job Title: Company Director
Company: Cranberry Source
Fave Meal: Almost anything on a mediterranean beach
Fave Game: Still waiting for a better game than *Doom II*, with luck *Quake* will be good and of course *QAD* will be fantastic.



PLAY: What makes a good game then?

JR: That's a very big question that every game designer would give a different answer to. I would say that I want a game to be easy to control (no 27 control button systems in my games) with some help from the computer for certain tasks. There should be lots to learn, as I want to feel that I have learnt a new skill, and therefore achieved something. Far too many games do so much for you that you might as well be in a different room for all the input you provide. I once watched an 18 month old baby complete the first level of Sonic while not watching the screen!

A good game should provide more than one route past difficult areas, I don't want to spend a year putting a great game together only to find someone has got stuck on a puzzle right at the beginning. I think gameplay has changed since the Eighties in that the simple concepts that worked ten years ago are no longer deep enough now. Games in the late Nineties need many things going on to keep the players interest, not to mention shit hot technology.

PLAY: How do you decide which ideas to work on?

JR: If it appeals to me then I go for it – why something appeals to me is sort of answered in the last question.

PLAY: Why do so many games simply seem to be variants on a successful formula? Is it hardware limitations, lack of imagination or something else?

JR: Lack of imagination on the part of the bean counters (accountants at the publishers). It's easy to point to a top ten full of fighting games and say "look fighting games sell well, let's do one of them."

PLAY: Do you think the PlayStation can change this?

JR: No



[ABOVE] Woman skewered by kebab on beach shock horror probe! Well, it wouldn't be a PLAY interview without a completely irrelevant shot would it?

PLAY: Is developing for the new machines any more fun than the older ones?

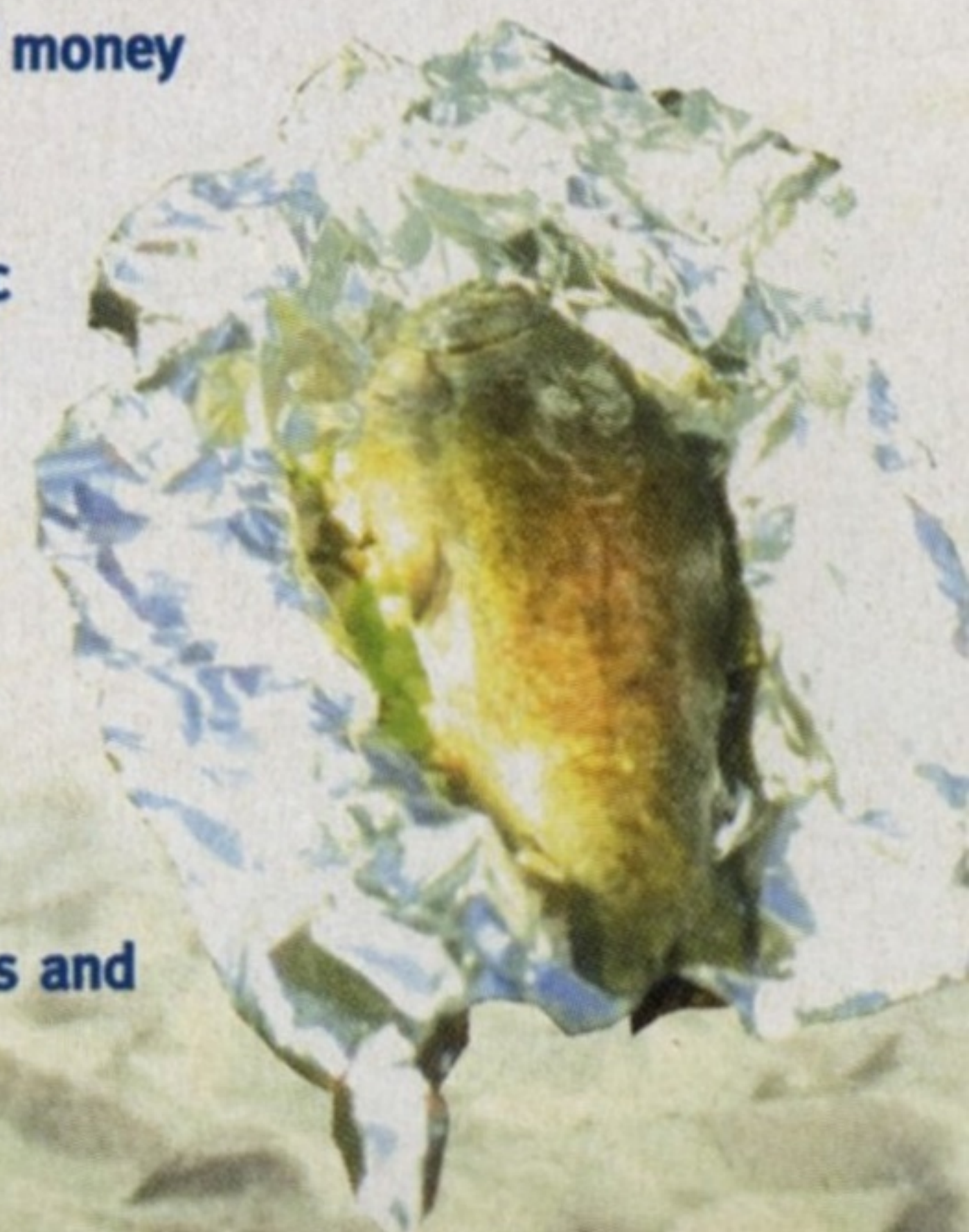
JR: Much more fun as I have less restrictions to my imagination

PLAY: Video games were once famously labelled "the new rock and roll" – what happened?

JR: It became worth a great deal of money and that tended to mean that the small wild and original companies got swallowed by large bureaucratic organisations who operated on the bean counter philosophy (discussed above).

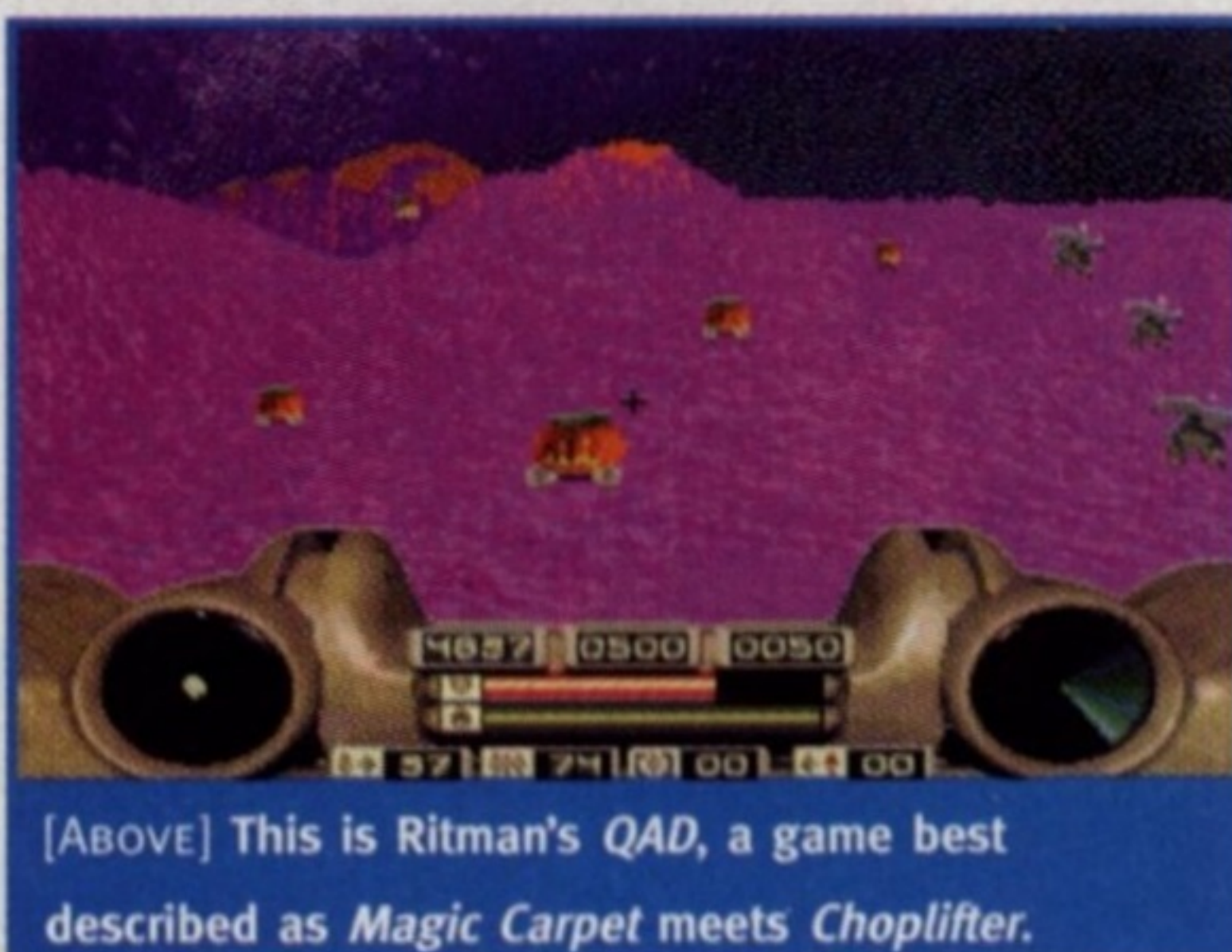
PLAY: What's the most rock 'n' roll thing you've done and did you respect yourself in the morning?

JR: I've fallen over at several parties and



BARBIE

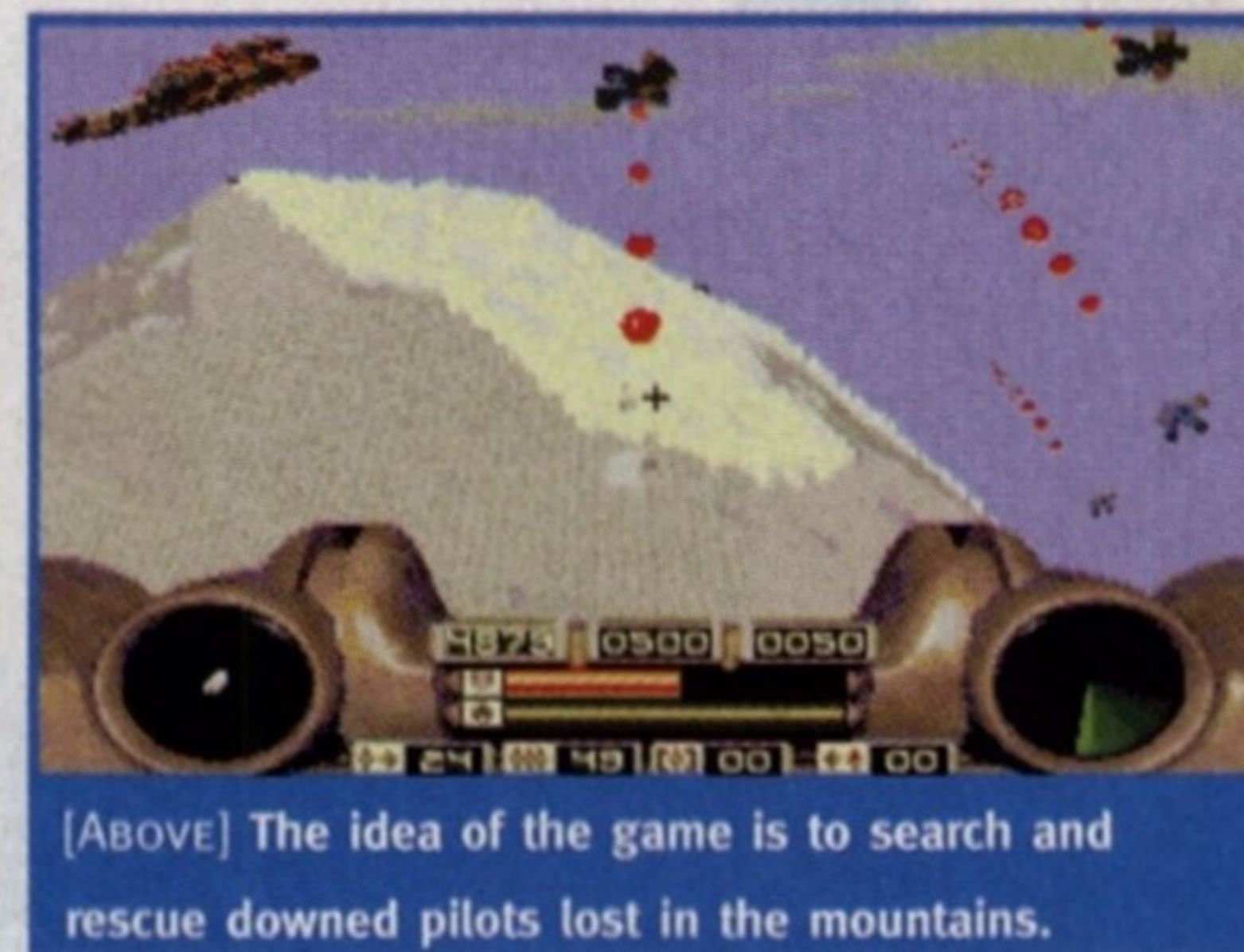
WITH... JON RITMAN



[ABOVE] This is Ritman's QAD, a game best described as *Magic Carpet* meets *Choplifter*.



[ABOVE] QAD uses an innovative 3-D engine based on fractals. The graphics never blur when up close.



[ABOVE] The idea of the game is to search and rescue downed pilots lost in the mountains.

It's hard to respect yourself the following morning when your head feels like the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust!

PLAY: Sony is trying to make the PlayStation cool, so the ultimate coolness question – do you own up to being a programmer at parties?

JR: I'm a games designer [winks].

PLAY: Tell us how your latest project is going at the moment, then.

JR: QAD is looking good and far more important, feeling good. In the weeks between ECTS and E3 it turned from a collection of excellent engines into a real game that I wanted to complete. At the moment the PlayStation version is still a



couple of months behind the PC but the *Beyond II* engine we've made for it is looking good.

PLAY: Pop quiz, what's more intense Quintessence or destruction?

JR: Look it up in a dictionary :-)

PLAY: List the following in order of importance – cash, cars, football, beer, video games, sex.

JR: Sex, cash, beer, games, cars, football.

PLAY: Stranded on a desert island time, only this one's got its own car-testing circuit. Pick the most desirable combination to have of car, partner, drink, video game and games machine...

JR: McLaren F1, Manhattan, Mario 64 + N64 and of course my partner Ruth (are you trying to get me castrated Damian?)

PLAY: Tell us why you are going to change the world?

JR: Cos I can.



[ABOVE] All the sprites in QAD are rendered in full 3-D so that when you fly around them, they don't just show you the same side. Cool.

THE RITMAN FILE:

THIS MAN WAS HUGE ON EIGHT-BIT. GOD KNOWS WHAT KIND OF GAMEPLAY-PACKED WONDERS HE'LL COME UP WITH ON THE PLAYSTATION. HERE'S A FULL SOFTOGRAPHY.

NAMTIR RAIDERS (SPECTRUM 48K)

COMBAT ZONE (SPECTRUM 48K),

3-D DIMENSION DESTRUCTORS (SPECTRUM 48K),

COSMIC DEBRIS (SPECTRUM 48K),

BEAR BOVVER (SPECTRUM 48K),

MATCH DAY (SPECTRUM 48K)

BATMAN (SPECTRUM 48K)

MATCH DAY 2 (SPECTRUM 48K)

HEAD OVER HEELS (SPECTRUM 48K)

MONSTER MAX (GAME BOY)



PLAYED OUT...

NEXT MONTH IN PLAY

TENKA

DOES PSYGNOSIS' 3-D shoot-'em-up have what it takes to lock horns with GT's *Duke Nukem 3D* and id's, *Quake*? PLAY issue 10 will have a special feature on the game where we will address that very question. Don't miss it.



PLUS!

Space Hulk, Deathtrap Dungeon, Blast Chamber, X-Men, Syndicate Wars, Dark Forces, Project Overkill, Galaxian3, Wild, Pure Simple Life, Spider, Hard Boiled, Die Hard Trilogy, MDK, Terra Nova, Beyond the Beyond, Epidemic, Command & Conquer, Time Commando, Pro Pinball, Transport Tycoon and many, many more...

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TO SHIN DEN 2 DUE JULY



RESIDENT EVIL DUE AUGUST

TOP TEN

- COPIED FROM GAMEPLAY SALES
1/5/96-25/5/96
- 1 RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION
 - 2 ALIEN TRILOGY
 - 3 NEED FOR SPEED
 - 4 STREETFIGHTER ALPHA
 - 5 TRUE PINBALL
 - 6 DESCENT
 - 7 ACTUA SOCCER
 - 8 DOOM
 - 9
 - 10 X COM

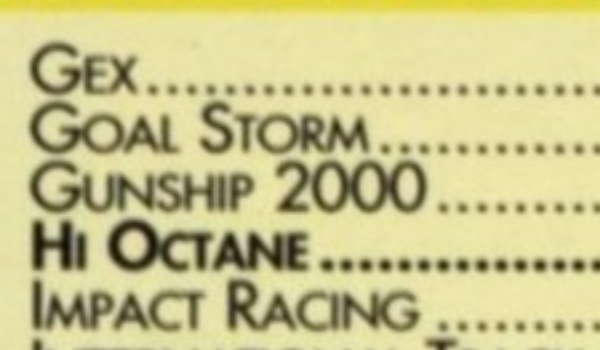
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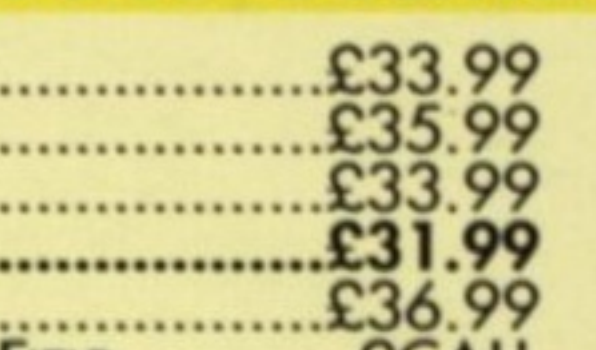
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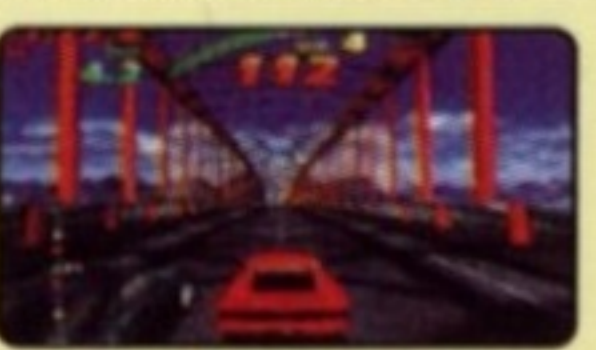


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ATLANTA '96.....END JULY
BLAZING DRAGONS.....EARLY AUGUST
BRAINEAD 13.....JULY
BUST A MOVE.....END JULY
CHEESY.....19TH JULY
CHRONICLES OF THE SWORD.....END JUNE
CRASH BANDICOOT.....SEPTEMBER
DARKSTALKERS.....END JULY
DAWN OF DARKNESS.....21ST JUNE
DEADLY SKIES.....JUNE
DIE HARD TRILOGY.....SEPTEMBER
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